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**The detective novel in Zulu: Form and theme in**

**C. T. Msimang's *Walivuma Icala***

by

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the  
award of the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS**

in

**AFRICAN LANGUAGES**

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July 2001

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## Declaration

I declare that **The detective novel in Zulu: form and theme in C. T. Msimang's *Walivum Icala*** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed by candidate

Signed: M. M. Masondo

05 July 2001  
Date

## **Dedication**

Dedicated to my sons  
and to the memory of my parents.

## **Acknowledgements**

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to everybody whose assistance made it possible for me to undertake and finish this study, particularly the following people:

- My supervisor, Professor Russell H. Kaschula, Department of Linguistics and Southern African Languages (UCT) for his professional guidance, constructive criticism, and offers of help throughout the different stages of this study. He was an invaluable source of inspiration to me.
- Professor C. T. Msimang (University of South Africa) for providing me with all the information I needed from him.
- Dr P. B. Mngadi, Department of African Languages (Vista) for her very constructive comments during the initial stages of this study.
- Ms Mendy Findeis (Department of Administration, University of Cape Town) for making me feel at home at the University at all times.
- Mr Dawie Malan, subject librarian at the University of South Africa, for helping me trace books and articles.
- Ms Holly Brooks (USA) for buying and sending me the books relevant to my study.
- Wits University library staff members who were always prepared to help.
- Mrs M. M. Coetzee (Shuter & Shooter) for typing the initial drafts of this study.
- Mr David Levey, Department of English (University of South Africa) who assisted with the final editing.
- Mrs Joanne Cannon, Department of English (University of South Africa) for correcting the final drafts and doing the layout of this study.
- I also wish to extend my deepest gratitude to all the members of my family and friends for the moral support and understanding.

**May God bless you all!**



## Summary

This study sets out to explore the literariness of C. T. Msimang's *Walivuma Icala* as a detective novel. The point of departure here is that in the isiZulu language, there is a lack of the detective novel as an art-form. Guided by this view, the basic elements of a detective novel, according to different scholars, will be discussed in an attempt to set ground rules for the study. The main focus of the discussion in this study is on form and theme of the detective novel.

It is also noted that there are no works in isiZulu evaluating and criticising the detective novel, hence this attempt. The traditional structural approach is used by which the features of a detective novel are applied to Msimang's *Walivuma Icala*.

The study comprises five chapters and two appendices which are explained in *Scope of the Study* in this dissertation.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

This study is concerned with form and theme in the isiZulu detective novel, and the extent to which this genre has enriched isiZulu literature. Msimang's detective novel, entitled *Walivuma Icala* (1996), will be used as a point of reference in this study. What motivated the researcher to undertake this study is that the detective novel is a new genre in South African indigenous languages as compared to the English language. Soitos (1996:13) states that the first detective stories in English were written by Edgar Allan Poe in 1840. Soitos adds that since then, the most read and "a large percentage of all books published each year in the United States are in the detective field".

Indeed it is claimed further that the detective genre "has proven to be of interest to scholars and academics" (Soitos, 1996:13). This shows a gap between English literature and South African indigenous languages literature, especially isiZulu. If one looks closely at this situation, one feels tempted to claim that this gap, relating to the detective genre in particular, does not exist only between English and South African indigenous languages, but it is the same gap within literary studies which exists between Europe and Africa.

The first detective novel in isiZulu appeared in 1990 and it was M. M. Masondo's *Iphisi Nezinyoka* (The Hunter and the Snakes). Marggraff (1998:102) observes that "the only writer to date of Zulu detective stories is Meshack Masondo". Thus far isiZulu has very few books that can be said to belong to the detective genre and the existing attempts in this regard can be listed as follows:

- (i) Masondo, M. M. 1990. *Iphisi Nezinyoka* (The Hunter and the Snakes). Johannesburg: Educum Publishers.
- (ii) Masondo, M. M. 1990. *Isigcawu Senkantolo* (In the Court). Johannesburg: Educum Publishers.
- (iii) Mhlongo, D. B. K. 1991. *Itshe Eliyigugu* (The Precious Stone). Florida: Vivlia Publishers and Booksellers.
- (iv) Masondo, M. M. 1994. *Ingalo Yomthetho* (The Arm of the law). Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter (Pty) Ltd.
- (v) Masondo, M. M. 1995. *Kanti Nawe?* (Even you?) Pietermaritzburg: Reach Out Publishers (Pty) Ltd.
- (vi) Masondo, M. M. 1995. *Ingwe neNgonyama* (The tiger and the lion). Johannesburg: Educum Publishers.
- (vii) Masondo, M. M. 1996. *Ngaze Ngazenza* (My fault). Pretoria: Dejager-Haum Publishers.
- (vii) Msimang, C. T. 1996. *Walivuma Icala* (He pleaded guilty). Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter (Pty) Ltd.
- (viii) Mathenjwa, L. F. 1997. *Sekusele Imizuzu* (Only minutes are remaining). Pretoria: Palm Publishers.

In the researcher's understanding, there has been no study on the detective genre, not only in isiZulu but in the isiNguni languages as a whole, except Annemarié de Bruin's '**n Kritiese waardering van 'Iphisi Nezinyoka' as 'n speurverhaal in Zoeloe**, UNISA B.A. (Hons.) article, 1995. The present study hopes to make a valuable contribution to research into the detective novel in South African indigenous languages. The emphasis of the dissertation will fall on form and theme of the detective novel in isiZulu.

## **1.2 Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to perform a critical analysis of C. T. Msimang's detective novel ***Walivuma Icala*** (He pleaded guilty). This study aims to define Msimang's book in terms of the existing definitions of the detective novel and depart from there, focusing on the form and theme of the detective novel as argued by different scholars. Eventually, this study aims to look critically at how Msimang uses the tools of the detective novel which have been defined and discussed in forming his novel. In other words, this study will consider both the strong and the weak points of Msimang's ***Walivuma Icala*** (He pleaded guilty) as a detective novel in terms of form and theme. The fundamental aim of this study however is to evolve an acceptable, recognisable and valuable strategy of approaching the detective novel, whether in the writing of it or in its analysis. The achievement of such aims could possibly make the detective novel more valuable to the communities which are haunted by the ever rising crime rate in the sense that once the people start writing, reading and studying more in the

detective genre it might have some psychological impact which might cause the people to become more aware of the importance of law enforcement in their societies.

### **1.3 Scope of the study**

The study comprises five chapters.

Chapter one of the study serves as an introduction focussing on the aims of the study, scope of the study, literature review, research methodology and the conclusion.

Chapter two concentrates on the aspects of form with specific reference to *Walivuma Icala*. Emphasis is on the most basic formal elements of any novel. These are the phases of a plot, which are the exposition, motorial moment, complication, climax and the denouement.

Chapter three discusses the setting and the characters. This study will critically look at the characters of the detective novel, *Walivuma Icala* which include the detective, the victims, the criminals, the suspects, the police and the minor characters.

Chapter four examines the concept of the theme. Here the theme in a detective novel and any other themes in *Walivuma Icala* is discussed in detail.

Chapter five is a concluding chapter which assesses whether Msimang managed to apply the elements of a detective novel or not in his novel. A number of general remarks complete this study.

There are two appendices at the end of this study: the first summarises the novel under discussion and the second recounts Msimang's biographical details from his date of birth up to the completion of this study.

#### **1.4 Definition of terms**

Terms which serve as the backbone of the study will be defined. In doing so the researcher aims to simplify and define in detail, if possible, most of these terms so that it will be easier to understand the context in which they are used in the study.

##### **(a) Detective story**

Many definitions of a detective story are postulated by different scholars. Some of these definitions are not very direct and appropriate in the discussion of the detective novel but are merely guides to assist readers in understanding the detective novel better. Krutch and Sayers in Winks (1980:15) regard the detective story as a fiction that has an interesting plot structure composed of a beginning, where mystery is introduced; a middle which recounts moves by the main character (the detective) and countermoves by the opposing forces; and the

end which entails the solution of the mystery. Poe in Aisenberg defines the detective story as a tale which:

"contained a single detective hero (in his case the renowned Auguste Dupin), analytical deduction and the combination of suspense and an emotional tone" (Aisenberg, 1978:203).

This statement seems to be the most basic definition of the detective story.

An additional expectation is that a detective novel should be realistic. This view is confirmed by Allan and Chacko thus:

"We demand in detective fiction a concern for reality. Verisimilitude - the strong sense of reality - is perhaps the detective story's primary concern ..." (Allan and Chacko 1974:1).

By being realistic, the idea is to portray the whole detective story and its detection techniques in a believable manner. What is expected in a well written detective story is the methodical discovery, by rational means, of the exact circumstances of a mysterious event or series of events. Clearly, one of the most important elements of a detective novel is the detection itself, as Murch states:

"But when there is an appeal to the reader's emotions, instead of solely to his intellectual faculties, he is led to feel indignation or horror at the crime, enjoyment of the hunt for evidence, and satisfaction when the guilty person is discovered. It is an important point that the detective story, in direct contrast to the crime story, recognises the activities of the criminal as reprehensible and not to be tolerated, much less regarded with amusement and admiration" (Murch, 1968:19).

This brings us to the fact that like any other kind of novel, whether historical, sociological, political, psychological, documentary, futuristic, fantasy, romantic,

regional, feminist, confessional or a comic novel in terms, of Maxwell-Mahon's (1984) discussion, a detective novel is not divorced from the idea that it should be:

"... associated with story-telling: the reader looks for characters with whom he can identify, for action in which he may become engaged, or for ideas and moral choices he may see dramatized" (Freedman, 1969:59).

Thus, a detective novel is like any other kind of novel in the aforementioned aspects, but structurally it is slightly different from other novels. The crime or the mystery must be effectively portrayed.

#### (b) **The crime or the mystery**

It is very important that the author of the detective novel uses every means to make the crime totally puzzling from the beginning of the novel and there should be no clues which may cause the outcome to be predicted. It is also important that the author portrays some of his characters as if they are the suspects or the obvious criminals. This can only be achieved through the application of characterisation techniques like other characters' speech or the same suspicious characters' speech and actions. This means that some characters are depicted in such a way that the reader ends up suspecting them to be the culprits. This strategy helps to keep the reader guessing throughout the novel. Supporting this idea, Burnett and Burnett feel that:

"This novelist must create suspense in the form of crisis, having the power to mystify us as he chooses, but never can he forget to keep the reader questioning, always the author must be one step ahead of the reader



and know answers which the reader may only guess"  
(Burnett & Burnett, 1975:152).

Suspense can obviously be created most successfully by withholding the identity of the real culprit from the reader. In many instances, authors misinterpret this technique by withholding the identity of the criminal till the late stages of the novel where a completely new character is introduced and appears at the end of the novel as the criminal. This should not occur. Treat warns the author thus:

"Although one of the jobs of the author is to conceal the identity of the murderer from the reader, this does not give the author a licence to introduce a totally new character on page 214 and reveal him as the murderer on page 215" (Treat, 1976:5).

This means that a character who will be revealed as guilty at the end of the novel should be present from the beginning so that the reader can become familiar with all the characters including the guilty one. The researcher's view here is that the most well concealed guilty character is the one who is used as the initiator of the investigation with the aim of proving his or her innocence or impressing his or her superiors and who even shows concern about the particular incident in question. Many such guilty people may be responsible persons who are holding superior positions. By holding this view the researcher does not mean that all the time one must see superior people being revealed as guilty characters in the detective novels. There are many ways of doing this depending on the author's creativity. What is important is that whatever the author is doing should be done convincingly and any loop-holes which the reader might question must be sealed.

It is also very clear that the detective novel is more refined as compared to the other types of novels. It unleashes the reader's interest and curiosity, it is fascinating and magnetic, it activates our rational thinking and enhances our power of forming conclusions and it also takes our minds on a long, exciting and spine-chilling excursion accompanying the hero, the detective, until he/she solves the mysterious event with his/her skills, intelligence, bravado and rational thinking. This is further supported by Winks where he states:

"... in a detective fiction the divine tension between the exact and unknown produces the central thrust of the story. Since death is a central puzzle to all major and minor writers, the detective story is seen to be sensational because it focuses on the cause and methods of death rather than on the fact of death itself" (Winks, 1980:5).

It is commonly known that there is natural and accidental death, yet the detective novel seems to be encouraging the idea that death is for a particular cause or emanates from a cause which may, during detection, be rationally exposed. Death, in all real life is the end, whereas in a detective story death is only a means to an end, which is - the detection of the mysterious cause. This mysterious event, death, has its facts in a detective novel concealed from the reader. Suspense is sustained for as long as the culprit is not yet brought to book.

Sometimes death in a detective story may appear to be accidental, suicidal or natural and therefore would not warrant any public interest. But it is equally true that such a death may later be discovered to have been a cold-blooded murder of the victim and this would then cause public interest in inquiry, thus the services

of a detective may be solicited. It is at this point in the story that emotions run high and many characters come into play as suspects, witnesses, tipsters, lovers, etc. These characters have a direct bearing on the plot structure and may have a negative effect on the detective's work. The interest of the readers and society in the murder is that:

"Murder is unique in that it abolishes the party it injures, so that society has to take the place of the victim and on his behalf demand atonement or grant forgiveness; it is the one crime in which society has a direct interest" (Auden in Winks, 1980:17).

However the "direct interest" of society in the murder as well as the emotional-high charge in which the society finds itself should not in any way divert the attention of the detective from the execution of his/her duty. The detective should remain balanced and neutral at all times. He should execute only his professional duties and skilfully follow the scientific clues necessary for his work. He should be emotionally detached from the case he is investigating and be as objective as possible. With the author having distanced himself without pity and empathy he can thus be in the best possible position to highlight the detective's intellectual prowess in procuring and analysing the clues and skills, dexterity and methodology he uses to unravel this mysterious event to the satisfaction of all concerned. With the author's feelings and emotions sidelined, the reader is thus given ample room to suspect any of the many characters involved at the initial stage of the novel, including the very detective who may be cleared at a very late stage.

A detective novel is usually punctuated by numerous events which distract the reader from the crime and its detection by holding the reader's attention. This view is also endorsed thus:

"Humour and love-making almost invariably play an important part of the crime story, providing the only happy, human side-light upon the rogues career and securing the reader's interest" (Murch, 1968:12).

These other incidents should not be allowed to disturb the flow of events in as far as crime and its detection is concerned. Should these incidents take too much of the detective novel then it turns out to be a love-story, as Sherlock Holmes once remarked to Dr Watson:

"Detection is, or ought to be, an exact science, and it should be treated in the same cold and unemotional manner. To tinge it with romanticism produces much the same effect as if you worked in a love-story or an elopement" (Murch, 1968:12).

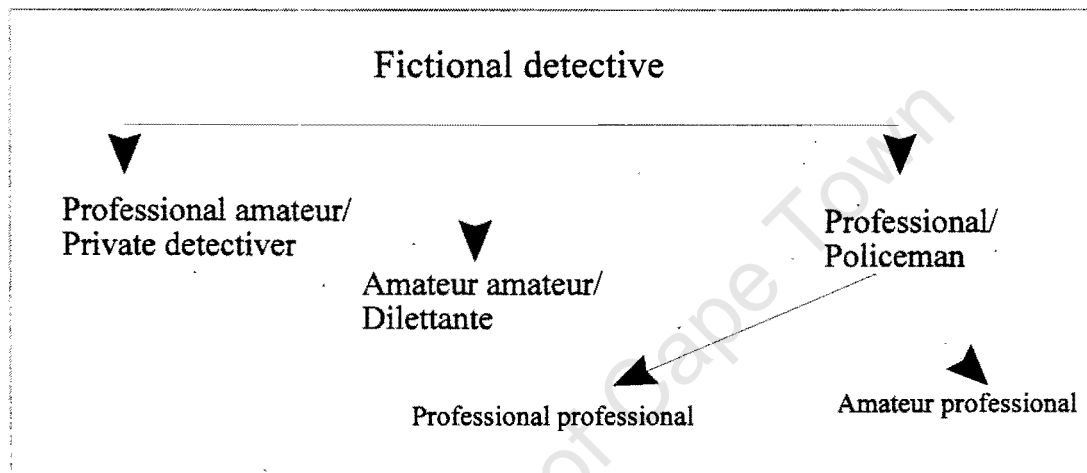
### **(c) The categories of the detective story**

The biggest question to answer at this point is: Are all detective stories the same or not? This seems to be a difficult question which cannot be answered easily because most detective stories look exactly the same in approach. In other words each detective story deals with crimes like "murders, robberies, corruption and blackmail which are all part and parcel of everyday and contemporary South African life" (Marggraff, 1998:103). This question is answered successfully by Binyon who states that the detective story can be grouped into:

"... three main classes of fictional detective: the professional amateur or private detective...; the

amateur amateur or dilettante...; and the professional or policeman, a category which can be subdivided into the professional professional, the policeman, who is only a policeman...; and the amateur professional, the policeman who is not only a policeman" (Binyon, 1989:6-7).

Binyon's classification of the detective can be schematically presented as follows:



Distinguishing between sub-divisions, which write about the professional amateur and the amateur amateur, Binyon states that:

"It is not too difficult to distinguish between these two subdivisions, even if, in the end, the judgement is subjective. To distinguish between the professional amateur, who is employed to investigate, and the purely amateur amateur, who is not paid, but detects out of curiosity and love of the game, ..." (Binyon, 1989:7).

This study will show to which category Msimang's novel *Walivuma Icala* belongs, in terms of Binyon's categorisation.

## 1.5 Research Methodology

No particular methods were used during research except reading guided by the traditional structural and thematic approaches. Applying these two approaches as guides, periodicals, books and journals were closely consulted in order to investigate those aspects of form and theme of a detective novel which are discussed in this dissertation. A final critiquing of Msimang's novel, *Walivuma Icala* is also be made in the light of the readings and analyses.

## 1.6 Conclusion

In the foregoing chapter, the detective novel in general and its development in isiZulu have been outlined. The detective novel is seen as a literary form through which an author conveys ideas such as educating, warning and most specifically entertaining the readers.

Since the whole study is based on form and theme of the detective novel, various types of themes and forms will be fully discussed in the following chapters. Various categories of the detective novel have been defined in this chapter. Basic terms of the detective novel and its nature have also been discussed, so that this chapter serves as a foundation of the whole argument which will be developed in this dissertation.

At this stage, it is important to state that a story outline in the form of a detailed summary of the novel, *Walivuma Icala*, is included as Appendix 1 on page 118 of this dissertation. It is suggested that this appendix be read first, before reading its actual analysis in terms of form and theme.

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## Chapter 2

### Form Aspects

#### 2.1 Introduction

Form means the arrangement of a narrative which includes a plan of events, which is in turn known as a **plot**. Thus, a difference between **plot** and **story** should be clearly understood. E. M. Forster (1927) was the first to introduce this pair of terms. He described the **story** as a "...narrative of events arranged in their time sequence", and **plot** as a "... narrative of events, the emphasis following on causality... ." Beckson and Ganz (1975:187) define plot further as the "... organization of incidents in a narrative or a play." The organization of incidents is further considered by Barnet, Berman and Burto who distinguish between **plot** and **story** thus:

"Distinctions between 'plot' and 'story' vary widely, but for many critics *story* is the sequence in which events occur as parts of a happening and *plot* is the sequence in which the author arranges (narrates or dramatizes) them" (Barnet, Berman and Burto, 1971:83-84).

A plot may embrace a subplot, a double plot or multiple plots. A subplot or underplot is a story developed along with the main plot, enhancing it, but not strictly meshed with it. A double plot is not the same thing as a subplot. In a double plot, the two may have almost equal value and are pursued simultaneously.



Some critics give fuller and much deeper definitions of a plot. Such scholars define plot in many ways:

"The plot in a dramatic or narrative work is the structure of its actions, as these are ordered and rendered toward achieving particular emotional and artistic effects" (Abrams, 1981:137).

A further definition of a plot is provided as follows:

"... as narrative of events linked by causality concerning a group of characters, which unfolds consecutively and coherently against a particular background at a specific time" (Heese and Lawton, 1993:217).

Shipley also defines a plot differently from the above-mentioned scholars thus:

"A plot is that framework of incidents, however simple or complex, upon which the narrative or drama is constructed; the events of the depicted struggle, as organised into an artistic unit" (Shipley, 1979:240).

In the efforts to clarify the difference between story and plot, the following example is given:

"The King died and then the Queen died is a story. The King died and then the Queen died of grief is a plot... a sense of causality overshadows it: ... If it is a story we say 'and then?' If it is a plot we ask 'why?' " (Forster, 1980:135).

This can be regarded as the basic form or structure of the detective narrative.

Sayers quotes Aristotle stating this about plot:

"The first essential, the life and soul, so to speak, of the detective story, is the plot and the characters come second" (Winks, 1980:27).

The above view of the basic structure or form of a narrative is supported as follows:

"There is one respect, at least, in which the detective-story has an advantage over every other kind of novel. It possesses an Aristotelian perfection of beginning, middle and end. A definite and single problem is set, worked out, and solved; its conclusion is not arbitrarily conditioned by marriage or death. It has a rounded (though limited) perfection of a triolet" (Allen and Chacko, 1974:376).

The above-mentioned structure, the middle portion that grips the attention of the reader in particular, must carry the suspense throughout the novel up to the end, where the solution of the mystery is procured through the detective's sound reasoning, careful calculation and observation, swift and agile actions and accurate deductions.

Willard Huntingdon Wright claims that the basis of a detective novel is the rational solution of a puzzle. He is also of the opinion that:

"The detective story is not really fiction, it is a complicated and extended puzzle cast in fictional form" (Palmer, 1978:93).

Winks (1980:16) emphasizes the idea that only the murderer knows the truth which he conceals. The detective is someone who is not involved in any crime but has a very sound reasoning and makes accurate deductions which will finally lead to the unravelling of the mystery. Murch also attests to this when he says:

"The detective story seeks to leave nothing unexplained: ..." (Murch, 1968:14).

This introductory discussion of plot could be briefly summarised as confirming that a plot is a plan of events in a story, is one aspect linked with character, setting and diction. None of these aspects is separable from the whole, and an adequate discussion of one would obviate discussion of the rest. If the chain of cause and effect makes the plot convincing, then the plot must be the outcome of trends of character; if the characters are to be credible and interesting, they must be a product of their setting; if the setting is to be depicted with any insight it must be described not in maps or statistics but in diction and images of suggestive power.

Plot has many aspects. Structurally, it can be divided into three parts: the beginning, the middle and the ending. Conventionally, the beginning and ending are known as exposition and dénouement (or resolution) respectively. The middle is sometimes referred to as the body. This is the main part of the plot, and it has a number of aspects as well. These include conflict, complication, tension, suspense, crisis/crises and the climax. From the exposition to the climax the chain of events should form a rising action, and from the climax to dénouement there should be falling action. The rising action can only be experienced when there is much conflict and tension which will keep the audience in suspense. Consequently, the falling action implies that the conflict is resolved.

The strict application of the traditional terms: exposition, motorial moment, complication, climax denouement and conclusion will be discussed below.

## **2.2 Phases of plot**

### **2.2.1 Exposition**

In much writing this is the part where the characters are introduced. In a drama, the characters and their circumstances are introduced by means of a prologue, or a monologue, but mostly by means of a dialogue. Here information that is essential to the progression of the narrative or action is communicated. This definition can be applied to fiction stating that the exposition is usually the beginning of the novel where the key characters and the problem facing them are introduced to the reader. The exposition has two sides to it: the state of equilibrium and the state of disequilibrium. There is therefore a statement of the initial harmony present, yet there is also a hint of the conflict which will arise later on. This situation is referred to as dynamic stability. An element of crisis is present in the possibility of a break in the existing harmony. Cohen remarks about the exposition:

"Exposition, which often comes at the beginning, provides the necessary background material for the reader. It establishes the setting, creates the basic atmosphere, provides information about the pasts of characters, and delineates vital contexts for the events which will soon begin to unfold" (Cohen, 1973:69).

This is exactly what is required in the detective novel. The author needs to introduce his main character, the detective and the problem facing him at the very early stages of his novel. It is also most important at this stage that the author

desists from using traditional and delaying techniques such as describing the characters, the scene or narrating unnecessary history of the characters.

"Exposition refers to such elements as to inform the readers of facts necessary to understand the plot, for instance, facts of time, persons, the preliminary state of affairs, and what will be at stake in the basic motivations impelling the plot" (Brooks et al, 1979:7).

In *Walivuma Icala* (1996), Msimang introduces his main character in the exposition stage of the narrative: Mbhekeni Dlamini, who is a detective. Mbhekeni is seen at the Supreme Court in Pritchard Street in Johannesburg, in the very first page of the narrative thus:

*"Wayengakahlali naphansi uMbhekeni, enkundleni yamacala eNgqumungeni, ngenkathi kuqandula isikhonzi senkantolo: 'Ukuthula eNkantolo'... Njengomuntu ongumseshi, uMbhekeni, umfoka Dlamini, wayejwayele ukungena kule nkundla, khona lapha eNgqumungeni. ENgqumungeni phela kulaphaya enkantolo yamajaji, eGoli kuPritchard Street"* (Msimang, 1996:1).

(Mbhekeni was not even seated in Ngqumungeni court when the prosecutor shouted: "Quiet in court."... Mbhekeni was used to coming to this court since he was a prosecutor himself. Ngqumungeni is the Supreme Court in Johannesburg, Pritchard Street).

Msimang uses a third person narrator to introduce his main character in order to avoid finding himself or some of his characters taking sides with the other characters. After the main character has been introduced, Msimang immediately introduces the problem facing him thus:

*"UMbhekeni wakuzwa konke futhi wakubona konke okwakwenzeka enkantolo. Nokho akazange akholwe ukuthi kusenkantolo. Kwamane kwaba sengathi*

*usebhayisikobho, ubukela ifilimu. Ngenkathi kuqaqamba isililo sentombazana leyo eyayihlezi ngaphambili, wezwa kushwaqa unwele ekhanda kwaba sengathi uyaqala ukuzifumana esenkundleni yamacala kanti uphila khona. Ngabe yayikhaliswa yini kangaka? Ngabe yayihlobene yini noZinhle owayebulelwe? Ngabe yayihlobene yini noMandla ongumbulali wamantombazana? Pho wayezotshelwa ngubani?" (Msimang, 1996:3).*

(Mbhekeni heard and saw everything that was happening at the court. But he never believed that he was at the court. It was as if he was at the cinema watching a movie. When the girl that was in front cried, he felt like he was in court for the first time, yet he was there everyday. Why was she crying like that? Was she related to Zinhle who had been killed? Was she related to Mandla who was the murderer of the girl? But who would explain that to him?).

Msimang succeeds in handling the exposition of the main character and the problems facing him in this manner because he puts his main character and the problems to the reader without trying to influence the reader in any manner. He leaves it to the reader to decide whether he/she sympathises with the main character or not. Many writers fail in this stage because experienced readers can see in the exposition stage which side is taken by the writer. Msimang also asks a number of questions in the exposition stage which will have great impact as the narrative develops. It is now clear to the reader that Mbhekeni must try to answer all the questions.

The other important character Msimang introduces at the exposition stage is Mandlenkosi Mtshali who is charged with murdering Zinhle Mavundla.

Msimang uses the third person narrator and the dialogue when introducing this character and the problem facing him as follows:

*"Mhlawumbe lesi silokozane sasibhebhezelwa wukubona ummangalelwa (uMandlenkosi: **my emphasis**) ekhuphuka ngezitebhisi ezisuka esitokisini esingaphansi komhlabathi. Wayehamba kalukhuni ehudula izinyawo ngenxa yokuthi wayeqalanqwe ngamaketango. Amaphoyisa amabili ayemxhake ngapha nangapha ayomfaka ebhokisini labamangalelwa" (Msimang, 1996:1).*

(Maybe this cry was as a result of seeing a defendant coming from his cell which is underground. He had trouble with walking, dragging his feet because of the chains. Two policemen held both his arms helping him to the stand).

Hereafter Msimang uses the dialogue technique to delineate this character and his problems as follows:

*" 'Nkosi yenkantolo ummangalelwa osebhokisini nguMandlenkosi Mtshali wase-99885 Mofolo South eSoweto. Ummangalelwa ubekwe icala lokuthi ngomhlaka-27 Aprili ngo-1988, eMofolo Park, wabulala ngenhloso nangesihluku, uZinhle Mavundla wase-909 Diepkloof Extension, eSoweto" ' (Msimang, 1996:2).*

("Your Honour, the defendant is Mandlenkosi Mtshali of 99885 Mofolo South, Soweto. The defendant has been charged for killing Zinhle Mavuso of 909 Diepkloof, Extension in Soweto at Mofolo Park on the 27th of April 1988").

After the introduction of Mandlenkosi Mtshali, who is charged with killing Zinhle Mavuso, it becomes clear to the reader that the major problem Mandlenkosi is facing is that he killed Zinhle Mavuso and he must suffer the

consequences. There are some other characters who are introduced at the exposition stage, like Nontobeko, the sister of the murdered Zinhle Mavundla, Thandeka Mtshali, the sister of Mandlenkosi who is charged with the murder of Zinhle, and MaSibiya the mother of Mandlenkosi and Thandeka. MaSibiya is seen wearing black clothes, which is a sign of mourning for her deceased husband. All these characters are noticed as sitting together throughout the hearing. Msimang uses the third person narrator when introducing these characters because their case is complicated, more because Thandeka and MaSibiya are the members of Mandlenkosi Mtshali's family. He is accused of killing Zinhle, the sister of Nontobeko. This is unusual in real life to find the members of the victim's family sympathising with the family of the accused. By using the third person narrator, Msimang is distancing himself and his characters from such an unrealistic relationship as this which is taking place between Nontobeko and the members of the accused's family. Msimang thus introduces Nontobeko and MaSibiya as consoling Thandeka who is crying for her brother, Mandlenkosi, who pleaded guilty to the murder of Zinhle Mavundla, his former girlfriend:

*"Kwaba akaligwinyile lelo, saqhuma isililo entombazaneni eyayihleli ebhentshini elingaphambili (Thandeka: emphasis) ... Enye intombazane eyabe ihleli ngakwesokudla yazama ukumbambatha lo mngani wayo emahlombe izama ukumduduzza (Nontobeko: emphasis) ... Ngakwesokunxele salo dade okhihla isililo kwakuhlezi umama osekhlile. Wayegqoke ilokwe elimnyama, embethe ijezi elimnyama, ekhanda eshuqule ngeduku elimabhadubhadu amnyama namhlophe (MaSibiya: emphasis) (Msimang, 1996:2-3).*



(When he said that, the girl who was in the front cried. Another girl that was on her right hand side tried to comfort her. On the left hand side of the crying girl, there was an old woman. She was dressed in a black dress, wearing a black jersey and on her head a black and white cloth).

The last characters who are introduced at the exposition stage are Nsimbi and MaMchunu, the mother of Zinhle Mavundla, and Thandeka the girl who is sitting with the Mtshali family. At this stage Msimang does not say much about Nsimbi except that he is accompanying MaMchunu. This is also a strange relationship according to the Zulu culture because the mother of the girl is not supposed to be close to the boyfriend of her daughter. This becomes clear as the narrative continues. Arguably, by introducing these characters through the third person narrator, Msimang is again distancing himself and his characters from this relationship and introduces them as follows:

*"... kwaphuma isigwebedla senkosikazi ehamba igxawuzele, nakhu phela inamagwegwe kanti futhi ifake amaxhumelo. Esifubeni lapha ingumabelemade. Yilolu hlobo oluncelisa umntwana esemhlane. ... Ezithendeni zale nkosikazi kulandela ibhungwana eliyisigadla. Kuyabonakala nje ukuthi bayahambisana"* (Msimang, 1996:5).

(There came out a huge woman who walked clumsily. She had rickets and was wearing high-heeled shoes. She had big breasts. Behind this woman there was a short big boy coming. It was obvious that they were together).

There are a number of mysterious issues which are introduced at this exposition stage. All these problems force the reader to be more interested in the outcome of the whole narrative. For example, Mandlenkosi pleads guilty to the murder of Zinhle Mavundla but the other characters who know Mandlenkosi better do

not accept that he killed Zinhle. This state of affairs immediately becomes a challenge to the reader as the reader wants to know why the other characters do not accept that Mandlenkosi killed Zinhle. Secondly, the reader wants to know why Mandlenkosi pleads guilty to a murder he never committed. For the fact that Mandlenkosi pleads guilty without justifying his reasons for murdering Zinhle is a problem. It is clear that the narrator is telling his narrative during the time when the death penalty is still in practice in South Africa; it is strange that Mandlenkosi does not avoid being sentenced to death. Mandlenkosi does not want a lawyer nor bail. This is a problem for the reader to solve.

Another problem which is introduced to the reader at the exposition stage is that Nontobeko is introduced sitting with the Mtshali family, the family of Mandlenkosi who pleads guilty to the murder of her sister, Zinhle. It is also difficult to believe that this may happen in real life.

Yet another problem which is introduced here is that of Mbhekeni Dlamini, the detective. At this stage Msimang creates the impression that Mbhekeni is very concerned about Mandlenkosi through such narration:

*"Okokuqala nje ubuso bukaMandla abunazo nezincu izimpawu zobugebengu. UMbhekeni izigebengu lezi wakhula ngazo. Waqala eseyiphoyisa ukuzingelana nezigebengu, kungongaphansi nongaphezulu. Njengoba esengufokisi nje, usibona ngisho sifulathele. Okwesibili, njengoba ebehla ngesitebhisi nje, izinyembezi zona bezehla ngezihlathi kuhle kwezomuntu wesimame" (Msimang, 1996:3 -4).*

(Firstly, Mandla's face does not show any signs of being a criminal. Mbhekeni grew up with criminals. He started chasing criminals when he was a policeman. Now that he is a detective, he sees a criminal even when he is facing the opposite direction from him. Secondly as he was going down the steps, he was crying like a woman).

The problem here is why Mbhekeni becomes so concerned with somebody he does not know. He goes as far as noticing that the face of Mandlenkosi shows that he is not a killer! The reader might expect the story to be as close as possible to the realism demanded by the other scholars in the introductory chapter, that is, that Mbhekeni should have sympathised with the family of the deceased instead! This is a surprise which the reader would expect to see sorted out as the narrative proceeds.

### **2.2.2 Motorial moment**

The motorial moment is usually an incident which activates the conflict. It discloses the nature and direction of the action or narrative. It is occasionally referred to as 'core-action', the action which sets into motion all other actions thereafter.

Motorial moment is further defined as:

"... the force that starts the conflict of opposing interests and sets in motion the rising action ..."  
(Holman and Harmon, 1986:192).

The definition of the motorial moment could be summarised by stating that in the exposition, the author has portrayed an equilibrium, a status quo in the lives of the characters during which time something unusual happened which has changed the situation. This change is called the motorial moment and it supplies the reader or the audience with the motives of the main characters and reactions to that which changes the status quo in their lives. In some instances the author may regard more than one event as the motorial moment, thus making it difficult for the reader to distinguish where exactly it begins and where it ends.

In *Walivuma Icala*, Msimang handles this part successfully as follows:

*"Liqhubeke ijaji libuze lowo mbuzo onzima kakhulu kuneminye: 'Uyalivuma noma uyaliphika icala?' Aqale acimeze isikhathi eside uMandla. Uthe esuka wabe ewaqanula kakhulu amehlo. Agqolozele futhi kuleyo ndawo emshayweni, anikine ikhanda qede aphenidule ngembhodlongo yezwi athi: 'Yebo nkosi yenkantolo. Ngiyalivuma icala' "* (Msimang, 1996:2).

(The judge continued and asked the most difficult question: "Are you guilty or not guilty?" Mandla firstly closed his eyes for a long time. He then opened his eyes wide. He stared up for a long time, shook his head and then answered with a big voice: "Yes, your Honour. I am guilty").

This is the incident which activates the main conflict throughout this novel. Other conflicts which are noted here and there in the novel are somehow linked to this main incident, which is the one which divides the characters into two groups. There are those who think that Mandlenkosi is guilty, like the police, the judge, the prosecutor and MaMchunu. There are also those who think that

Mandlenkosi is innocent, like his sister Thandeka, his mother MaSibiya, most amazingly Nontobeko the sister of the murdered Zinhle Mavundla, and strangely enough the detective Mbhekeni Dlamini, who does not even know Mandlenkosi. As the narrative continues, the characters are influenced by this incident, and consequently exist in these two opposing camps who try to prove the others wrong. Although there are some incidents later, such as the slapping of Nontobeko by her mother MaMchunu, and some squabbles between Thandeka and her brother Mandlenkosi, what is clear is that they are influenced or they happen because of the disagreements among the characters which are caused by this main incident. There is no other incident in this novel which better qualifies to be referred to as the motorial moment than the pleading guilty of Mandlenkosi Mtshali.

### **2.2.3 Complication / Rising Action**

The complication or rising action shows the different forces in conflict. Each incident, each scene contributes to the enlargement of the problem, to the arrival at an unavoidable point of decision. In the complication stage the development of conflict and of the actions which were introduced in the exposition should take place. As a detective story writer it is at this stage that the author will be expected to introduce some forces which will be engaged in deadly conflict with the main character, the detective. The following view is noted about the complication:

"... complication implies resistance to the movement towards solution of the problem from which the plot stems" (Brooks, 1975:8).

The definition of the complication stage could be summed up by stating that the action that was started by the motorial moment is taken further towards the climax. Each and every scene must contribute. The situation must become more and more complicated. There will be resistance in finding a solution to the complexity. The conflict must become fiercer with tension progressively rising, hence this phase is referred to as the rising action. This phase is characterised by a number of pushes and pulls that increase the tension while arousing the reader's curiosity.

In *Walivuma Icala* complication of events takes place in many different ways. Firstly, Mandlenkosi's pleading guilty to this charge complicates matters for those who do not see him as the murderer and benefits those who see him as the murderer. It is for this reason that MaMchunu says that:

" '... ngiyambonga uNkulunkulu namhlanje ngoba iselelesi sizivumele ngowaso umlomo ukuthi yisona umbulali. Sekusele kuphela ukuba ijaji lisigwebe intambo...' " (Msimang, 1996:14).

("I thank God today because the criminal agreed that he is the murderer. The only thing left is for the judge to give him a life sentence.")

Secondly, what further complicates the matters for those who want to help Mandlenkosi is his refusal to accept their assistance. For example, Thandeka

introduces the detective Mbhekeni Dlamini and the lawyer Mr Gasa to her brother Mandlenkosi as the people who will assist him in this case, but Mandlenkosi replies by asking his sister, Thandeka this question:

*" 'Kodwa nithandelani ukuphazamisa umoya wami, Thandeka?' Kubhavumula uMandla kungalindele muntu. 'Koze kube kangaki nginichazela ukuthi angidingi mmeli? ...' "* (Msimang, 1996:42).

("But why do you trouble me, Thandeka?" said Mandla. "How many times must I tell you that I do not need an attorney?").

What further complicates this issue is that when Mbhekeni asks Mandlenkosi where he obtained the knife he used to murder Zinhle, instead of answering the question Mandlenkosi turns to his sister Thandeka and says:

*" 'Mtshela, Thandeka! Mtshela, mntakababa, ukuthi selokhu ngazalwa angikaze ngisiphathele umuntu isikhali. Uma ngiphethe umese ngisuke ngizohlaba inkukhu noma ngizocwecwa amazambane okanye amapentshisi. Sasithandana noZinhle. Sasicabangelana okuhle kodwa. Umese wawungenayo indawo kulolo thando olumsulwa, olungenacashaza ...' "* (Msimang, 1996:43).

("Tell him Thandeka! Tell him my sister that I have never touched a weapon since I was born. If I have a knife I use it for slaughtering a chicken or peeling potatoes or a peach. I was in love with Zinhle. We were thinking about good things only. A knife never had space in that pure, indescribable love").

Statements like this indirectly suggest that he did not kill Zinhle, which adds to the complication of events.

The other complication which is noted is MaMchunu's insistence that her second daughter Nontobeko must also love Nsimbi! Why does MaMchunu do this to her daughters even if they show her that they do not like it? These actions cause great confusion in the reader's mind and as a result further complicate events in the narrative.

All the obstacles which Mbhekeni comes across during his acts of detection add to these complications. Firstly, when Mbhekeni starts his detection in Soweto he is being threatened by Sergeant Mbatha in Soweto to "move out of the way," which means that Mbhekeni must not interfere with the police's job otherwise he will get into trouble. This threat by a senior policeman to someone who is trying to solve a murder case also creates complications!

Secondly, the fact that Mbhekeni is immediately attacked and injured after being threatened by the senior police officer, who is supposed to be joining hands with him in fighting crime, also causes great interest to the reader.

Thirdly, the sentencing of Mandlenkosi to twenty years in prison for the murder of Zinhle Mavundla which is followed by Mbhekeni starting to suffer from the mental illness that is described by the doctor as a blood clot which is stuck somewhere in his head, complicates matters as the reader starts guessing what will happen next. This complication of events leads to the rising action in the narrative. Thus the narrative reaches its climax.



#### 2.2.4 Climax / Crisis Stage

At times this is referred to as the crisis, the inevitable eruption, the highest point where the peripeteia or turning point is experienced. A change takes place in the lives and interests of the characters. At the same time a change sets in, in the attitudes and expectations of the audience or the reader.

The following definitions of a climax are provided. The first definition is that which defines climax as:

"... the highest or most important point towards which the chain of events has been moving. It can be the point at which the issues and conflicts are fully and clearly resolved..." (Cohen, 1973:177).

The second definition defines climax as:

"The presentation of ideas or events in ascending order of importance, least first. Now generally used to refer to the highest or culminating point of this series" (Shipley, 1979:51).

The above views are also found in Brooks who states that:

"... this phase is the point at which the forces in conflict reach their moment of greatest concentration, the moment at which as it develop subsequently, the apparently dominant force becomes the subordinates..." (Brooks, 1975:8).

At this point issues and conflicts in the plot are fully and clearly resolved and all that has happened up to the climax is unravelled. This climax can also be a moment of sober recognition of a truth previously unknown to a character and the reader. To the researcher the climax is where the story reaches a point of no

return, which Maphumulo (1996:32) refers to as a "do or die point". A detective story writer is expected to create many questions in the readers' minds at this stage. All that the reader has been guessing should be proven wrong or correct. Sometimes the reader finds himself doubting the intelligence of the main character, the detective, at this stage. The biggest question which must be in the readers' minds should be "what next?"

In *Walivuma Icala* the turning point which is regarded as the climax of the narrative is noted when Mandlenkosi is released on R3 000 bail from prison.

This climax continues with the immediate recovery of Mbhekeni Dlamini from the mental illness which attacked him after hearing the news that Mandlenkosi has been sentenced to twenty years, thus giving him a chance to appeal against the sentence. At this stage the reader starts to realise that Dlamini has not only been physically sick, but mentally too, because he could not help somebody whom he regards as innocent:

*"Okubuhlungu wukuthi umqondo wawungaswabuluki masisha. Ngisho odokotela babekhathazekile ngalokho. Babesho nokusho ukuthi uMbhekeni ucabangana nezinto eziningi afisa ukuba ngabe uyazenza manje lokho kuyawugqilaza umqondo wakhe ungaze wakuthola ukuphumula"* (Msimang, 1996:116-117).

(What is bad is that the mind was not working well. Even the doctors were worried about that. They were saying Mbhekeni thinks about many things that he should have been doing, and that stresses his mind. It does not rest).

It seems as if it is correct that the blood clot which has been causing Mbhekeni to be mentally sick causes the psychological instability of Mbhekeni because immediately after Gasa has broken the news about Mandlenkosi to him, he jumps up with joy and demands to be discharged immediately from the hospital. When the nurse refuses he says:

*" 'Uyazi nawe Sista ukuthi inkinga yami isixazululekile. Ihlule ebelisanganisa odokotela lisanganise ngisho mina uqobo selikhishiwe laze langwatshwa. Cishe ukuthi ngisho namjovo lowo angisawudingi' "* (Msimang, 1996:136).

("You know sister that my problem has been solved. The clot that had been driving doctors and myself crazy has been removed. It has even been buried. Maybe I don't even need that injection").

Mandlenkosi's confession that he did not kill Zinhle but that he pleaded guilty so that he could be sentenced to death, as this is the only way of meeting Zinhle again, is another climax which is noted in this narrative. This is a climax in the sense that the reader starts doubting whether Mandlenkosi's confession is the truth or whether he just says it because he feels trapped in prison because he was not sentenced to death as he was expecting to be.

Another turn of events which could be confused with the climax of this narrative is noted when all the police, even Sergeant Mbatha, eventually co-operate with Mbhekeni and follow up the subsequent evidence which is given by MaMbanjwa. The arrest of Jakes Dlamini for attacking and injuring Mbhekeni, and the information Jakes provides to the police and Mbhekeni thereafter that

Mtshali's house will be attacked, adds to the turn of events in this narrative. The attack on Mtshali's house, the subsequent killing of Simphiwe by the attackers and the killing of one of the attackers by the police can also to some extent be noted as the climax of the narrative. The compactness of this narrative makes it difficult for the reader to come out with a definite single climax.

As this narrative reaches its do or die point which is characterised by a number of pushes and pulls, what is noted is that the reader becomes more and more interested in the outcome and at the same time guesses what will happen to which character.

#### **2.2.5 Turning point / Peripeteia or falling action**

In this phase, characters give expression to their emotions and the action or narration takes a definite turn in one way or another.

In the falling action the dramatist or the novelist portrays the denouement or the consequences of the climax. A remarkable change of direction is evident here. There are no signs of conflict and tension in this part of the story. The action is being carried to its final conclusion.

Here, all the events which appeared to be mysterious to the reader are unravelled.

It is for this reason that denouement is defined as:

"The unravelling of the complications of a plot, immediately after the climax" (Shipley, 1979:77).

The turning point or falling action in *Walivuma Icala* is noted when Nsimbi together with his assassins are arrested. In the Bloemfontein Supreme Court of Appeal, Mandlenkosi is acquitted of the murder. What is important here is that Nsimbi confesses about his past relationship with MaMchunu and their activities. In his confession he starts by telling the court how he went to Mavundla's house in the first place as follows:

*" 'Nkosi yenkantolo, ngaya kwaMavundla ngibizwe ngumama wakhona uMaMchunu' "* (Msimang, 1996:212).

("Your Honour, I went to Mavundla's because I was called by Mrs. Mavundla").

After this introduction, Nsimbi starts telling the court how MaMchunu tried to cause her murdered daughter, Zinhle, to fall in love with him and at the same time ended her love relationship with Mandlenkosi. Nsimbi explains this situation as follows:

*" 'Ngamfica emele indodakazi yakhe (umufi) ethi ayifonele uMandla imutshele ukuthi isimalile. Indodakazi yakhe - ngisho u ... ngisho u... uZinhle - yafona yamala uMandla kodwa ikhala. Yathi ingafona waphendukela kimi wathi nangoke umakoti wakho akusekho bhobhodlelana elizokubangisa yena. Waphuma wasishiya sobabili. Ngajabula kakhulu ukuthola leli thuba ngoba kwase kuyiminyaka ngimeshela uZinhle kodwa engafuni ukungiqoma. Futhi ngangicasulwa ukubanga uZinhle nomfokazana onguMandla, impabanga uqobo lwayo' "* (Msimang, 1996:212).

("I found her pestering her deceased daughter, that she should phone Mandla and tell him that their relationship is over. I am referring to Zinhle - she

phoned to end the relationship but she was crying. After the daughter phoned, she turned to me and said, this is your wife, there is no man that will disturb you. I was delighted to get that opportunity because I'd needed Zinhle for years and she couldn't love me. It made me angry to compete with Mandla for her, a poor man").

Nsimbi also explains that after this incident Zinhle pushed him away and went to Mandlenkosi. He followed her to Mofolo Park where he stabbed her to death but it was not his aim to kill her.

Asked to explain about the killing of Simphiwe and the attempted murder of Mbhekeni Dlamini, Nsimbi agrees that:

*" 'Bobabili bathengelwa yimi izigebengu. Ngangingaqondile, ngängenziwa ukwesaba. Ngambona uDlamini eqala ukwejwayela oThandeka ngesaba ukuthi uzoba yingozi kimi ... USimphiwe yena ngangingenandaba naye, ngangihlose uMandla. Kwasho umama uMaMchunu wathi angimbulale uMandla. ... Kodwa ngangingaqondile ukumbulala ... ngangesaba, nkosi yami. Umama uMaMchunu wayehlala engithuka ethi ngiyigwala. Wayethi angibambe uNontobeko ngimkhulelise. Nguyena owanginika uR10 000.00 wathi angithenge izigebengu ziyobulala uMandla ...' " (Msimang, 1996:213-214).*

("I hired criminals to kill both of them. I did not mean to but I was afraid. I realized that Dlamini was beginning to befriend Thandeka. I was afraid that he was getting dangerous to me. I didn't mind Simphiwe, I was after Mandla. Mrs Mchunu told me to kill Mandla. But, I did not mean to kill him. I was afraid, oh Lord. Mrs Mchunu used to insult me, calling me a coward. She said I should force myself on Nontobeko and make her pregnant. She gave me R10 000.00 to hire people who were going to kill Mandla").

This confession by Nsimbi turns the narrative completely around. The reader now knows all that has been hidden, ever since the exposition stage. The next question in the reader's mind is: what will be the punishment for the guilty party? The final stage satisfies the reader's curiosity.

#### **2.2.6 Dénouement (resolution) and conclusion**

Cuddon (1982:566) defines the resolution (dénouement) as those events which form the outcome of the climax of a play or story. He says that it is the equivalent of falling action. The term resolution can, according to Madden (1980:116), be used interchangeably with dénouement. In the resolution, the mind dwells on the bringing together of all loose ends. Toward the end, the character may experience a discovery of the truth; this is sometimes called a moment of revelation or recognition, in which perhaps he understands himself/herself and his/her relation with others.

The dénouement (resolution) is usually of special importance for it gives the clarification of all the events and evidence which have accumulated during the story. It also relates what ultimately happens to each of the characters. These two points can be simplified further, to make more sense out of them. **Dénouement** is the stage at which the issues and conflicts are fully and clearly resolved. At this stage the mystery should be unravelled. All the questions and guesses which have been haunting the reader from the exposition to this point should be answered. It is at this stage that the author may (if he/she feels so) help

the reader by answering questions like why a particular character was behaving in a particular way. To do this if necessary, the author may use the character to tell another character or characters the reason for his actions and behaviour.

It is always difficult to show the exact difference between the dénouement and the turning point because the incidents which happen in the turning point also qualify to be defined as the denouement. For example, in *Walivuma Icala* the dénouement takes place when Jakes Dlamini, who had attempted to kill Mbhekeni, changes and decides to assist him. Dénouement is also noticed when Nsimbi is arrested and later on tells the court why he killed Zinhle and attempted to kill Mandlenkosi and Mbhekeni by hiring murderers to kill them.

The reason why these incidents qualify to be defined as the denouement is because much of the confession takes place in them, thus resolving all the conflicts and answering such questions as why a certain character behaved in a particular way.

The last part of the dénouement which is noted in this novel occurs when MaMchunu confesses to Nontobeko why she forced them (Zinhle and Nontobeko) to marry Nsimbi, as follows:

*" 'Uze umtshale uyihlo mntanami ukuthi angixolele ngamaphutha ami. Konke ngakwenziswa wuthando. Ngendlela enginithanda ngayo ngangihlale nginifisela okuhle kodwa; okuphambili kodwa. Ngangithi abukho ubuhle emhlabeni obedlula ukushadela emndenini weziqu mama. Ngiphoxekile namhlanje ngoba lobo*



*buhle buphenduke ingcwaba. Ngiyambonga uNkulunkulu ngoba wena uphunyulile. Uhambe kahle' "* (Msimang, 1996:216-217).

("Please tell your father my child to forgive me for all my mistakes. All I did was because of love. I love you so much that I planned and wished all that is good for you. I thought there was no beauty in this world that surpasses marrying into a wealthy family. I am disappointed today because that beauty turned into a grave. I thank God because you escaped. Go well!").

After this confession all the questions have been answered. The reader knows why MaMchunu acted the way she did, why certain things took place in the narrative and how they were carried out.

The next step which the reader is waiting for, is the judgement which is the conclusion of the narrative. At the **conclusion** stage the mystery is solved, judgement (if there is one) is passed and the story ends. The researcher's personal feeling is that a good detective novel needs to end at the dénouement or even in the climax! The reason for this is that the passing of judgements could be viewed by different people in many different ways. Some may feel that judgement is too lenient, too harsh, excessively barbaric or reflects hatred towards people of a certain gender, racial group, religion, political group and so on. It will be remembered how Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* (1948) was received with mixed feelings among the different racial groups after he showed the court sentencing the son of the black Reverend Khumalo to death for killing the son of the white farmer, James Jarvis. It must be noted, however, that some

narratives may come to their end immediately after the climax. In some the dénouement may be quite long whereas in some it may be short. These still pass as good narratives. It all depends on the particular novelist's plot. For example, some narratives may have too many questions to respond to, like in the case of *Walivuma Icala*. If there are too many unanswered questions, one denouement may be longer because the author may use this denouement to respond to such questions. Simple stories which are not flooded with complications usually have a very short denouement because their authors do not need to respond to or try to answer many questions.

The conclusion is reached when the narrative through its main character, gives the feeling that the purpose thereof has been achieved and that the conflict has been resolved.

In *Walivuma Icala*, Msimang concludes his narrative effectively. For example, after the guilty characters have been arrested, he avoids passing judgements which may be wrongly interpreted by the readers. Instead, he concludes the case as follows:

*"Nokho isiphetho sabe sesisobala. Yize kunjalo, ijaji kwakumele ukuba libucubungule bonke ubufakazi ukuze kupheleliswe ubulungisa. Laqala ekuqaleni lathi leli cala beledluliselwe emphelandaba ngenxa yobufakazi obusha obu vele selinqunyiwe eGoli. Lambonga kakhulu uDlamini ngentshisekelo yakhe ngoba kungenjalo ngabe kwajeziswa umuntu ongenacala. Labucubungula ubufakazi bukaMandla lase ligcizelela ukuthi obaseGoli abunaso isisindo ngoba babungafungelwe. Lamkhipha phambili*

*uMandla lase linguma ukuthi kumele leli cala liqalwe kabusha enkantolo eqondene nalokho kodwa lethweswe uNsimbi Zwane njengoba ayesevele elivumile" Msimang (1996:215).*

(The end was obvious. However, the judge had to check all the evidence so that justice would be complete. He first said that they brought this case to the Supreme Court because of new evidence which came after the case was closed in Johannesburg. He thanked Dlamini for his determination because they would have punished an innocent man. He checked Mandla's evidence and said that the Johannesburg case is weak because it was not sworn evidence. Mandla was discharged and the judge decided that the case should be started afresh, in the relevant court but that Nsimbi Zwane should be found guilty since he admitted to the crime).

This is a very fair conclusion to the case by Msimang because he concludes it by stating what the reader already knows. He does not fall into the trap of passing judgements which may be unfair according to the South African constitution, or too weak or harsh to be regarded as an acceptable sentence for the particular case.

As usual, after being involved in a successful struggle the warriors celebrate. Msimang also does this because he portrays Mbhekeni, Mandlenkosi, Nontobeko and Thandeka as being very happy with the way the case went. They are glad that at the end the truth has come out and Mandlenkosi is found not guilty.

Mbhekeni expresses his happiness to Thandeka:

*" '... ayikho into engijabulisa njengokwazi ukuthi isikhuni sesize sabuya nomkhwezeli. NguJesu kuphela, Thandeka, owathwala izono, kungezona ezakhe; wahlawula icala kungecala lakhe' " (Msimang, 1996:218).*

("I am so glad that the doer of evil has been found. Thandeka, it is only Jesus who carried sins that were not his. He paid for the debt that was not his").

These characters are also happy for Zinhle because they know now that her soul will eventually rest in peace because her murderer is behind bars. They thank God for winning this battle and Nontobeko, the sister of the murdered Zinhle, confirms:

*" 'Namhlanje uzophumula ngokuthula umntakababa uZinhle, laphe elele khona. Nkosi! Makuthi imiphefumulo yabo bonke abedlulileyo, bekukholwa bekwesaba wena, iphumule ngokuthula kuze kufike isikhathi sokuvuka' "* (Msimang, 1996:218).

("Today, my sister Zinhle is going to sleep in peace where she is sleeping. Lord! Let the souls of all those who died, believing in you and fearing you, rest in peace until resurrection day").

The story ends here. Everybody is satisfied and all problems have been sorted out.

### **2.3 Conclusion**

It is fitting to conclude this chapter with Shipley's (1979:240) definition that the plot is not the text, neither is it the art-work, but it is the deduction the student of literature can make from the text. It is important therefore to note that one can usually expect logic in a literary text, with little or no room for the

unaccountable. Every event should flow smoothly into every other. This is exactly what happens in *Walivuma Icala*.

Conflict is at the centre of the plot structure. This conflict must be brought about by the actions of the characters, which will bring about suspense and tension, with all the events forming an organic and coherent whole. Msimang handles this part well throughout his narrative *Walivuma Icala*. Since action is responsible for the causation of conflict, it is safe to assume that there will be no detective story without action and without characters. This conflict emanates from the contest between a protagonistic character or a group of characters and the antagonistic character or group of characters. Other scholars have this to say about conflict:

"The plot of a tragedy is usually concerned with conflict. The protagonist is pitted against an important adversary called the antagonist. This adversary need not necessarily be a person" (Heese and Lawton, 1993:116).

The above adversary may be an antagonistic force such as society, fate, nature or environment or it may be a psychological or spiritual struggle within a character against a certain aspect of that person. In *Walivuma Icala* Mbhekeni Dlamini is the protagonist and Nsimbi is the antagonist. MaMchunu is the co-antagonist because she works very close with Nsimbi Zwane who is the antagonist throughout this narrative. She is the victim of internal conflict in much of the narrative, which may be triggered by an external factor. These aspects are noted

in the cases of Nsimbi and MaMchunu. Dietrich and Sundell (1967:48) consequently comment thus:

"Sometimes external conflicts are merely projections of internal conflicts" (Dietrich and Sundell, 1967:48).

Aristotle suggests that a drama should have a beginning, middle and an end. In a detective story these parts are found in the crime, usually murder, the detection of the crime and the discovery and punishment of the murderer respectively. Thus, the detective story has a fixed formula that is well structured and rigid. This claim also has the approval of Winks (1980:7) who states that the detective story is created with clear rhythms, in four movements. The first movement defines the problem, for example, to solve a murder. The second consists of looking for the evidence as it relates to the crime. The third movement or phase is that of assessing the evidence and the fourth brings the action back to the beginning, in which judgement is now passed on the meaning of events, and from this judgement arises the revelation of the identity and more obvious motivation of the criminal. Once all this is successfully done by the author or identified by the critic then the narrative can be ended. It is important that all sides should be treated fairly and nothing should be left hanging. Clearly, *Walivuma Icala* has kept to most of the above mentioned requirements.

## Chapter 3

### Setting and Characterisation

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on other major aspects of the novel, its setting and the characterisation, which are obviously essential because without them there will be no novel or narrative. Setting decides whether the narrative will be accepted or not. If the setting is not believable, then the whole narrative is a failure because its believability and acceptability will be doubtful, especially in a detective narrative. The actions and the behaviour of the characters should be realistic. As the characterisation involves a lot of personalities, so the personality differences should be portrayed in the narrative. This chapter proceeds from here by looking at the various definitions of setting and characterisation as argued by different scholars, and at how Msimang treats setting and characterisation in his detective novel, *Walivuma Icala*.

#### 3.2 Setting

Setting is the place or environment in which the story takes place. The characters' actions are influenced by the environment. Some literary scholars such as Pretorius and Swart (1982:8-9) distinguish between the physical and the non-physical milieu. The former, according to them, is the physical background

against which the story takes place, for example the desert or the city, and the latter is the non-physical climate or atmosphere against which the story unfolds, for example a battle between two characters for a vacant powerful position in their society creates a background of bitterness, envy and hatred; or a story about a group of sailors who are lost with their ship in the ocean can unfold against a background of survival. The ideal literary situation is when the two are complementary. The setting can establish a certain atmosphere and can also influence the characters' actions, manner of speech, mode of dress and social status.

A different classification of the various types of settings is provided by Msimang (1987:87-88). He states that setting is one of the most important aspects of the narrative, and that it can be divided into locale which deals with physical or geographical setting, time which deals with the historical period during which the narrative takes place and social circumstances which depict the social norms, values, customs and beliefs of the society being described in the narrative.

Scholars give a number of different definitions of setting, varying from the simple to the complex. Brooks and Warren provide a simple definition of setting as:

'The physical background, the element of place, in a story' (Brooks and Warren, 1979:514).



Setting is also defined further as:

"The time and place in which the action of a story or play occurs" (Beckson and Ganz, 1970:201).

Cohen (1973:27) briefly states that "Setting embraces the totality of an environment." A broader definition of a setting which is very close to that of

Msimang, is:

"The setting of a narrative or dramatic work is the general locale, historical time, and social circumstances in which action occurs; the setting of an episode or scene within a work is the particular physical location in which it takes place" (Abrams, 1981:75).

A simpler definition of a setting is:

"A story occurs, after all, in a particular place, and places provoke, however minimally, certain feelings" (Brooks, Purser and Warren, 1975:10).

It appears that Msimang covers all components of the above definitions of the setting in *Walivuma Icala*. Physical or geographical setting is described when this narrative is set in the Gauteng Province within the area known as the Rand, i.e. the West Rand and the East Rand but also takes place in Pretoria and Bloemfontein. One may mention that in the beginning the story sets off in the Johannesburg Supreme Court in Pritchard Street where Mandlenkosi Mtshali, who stays in number 99885 Mofolo South in Soweto, is charged with the murder of Zinhle Mavundla who was staying in number 909 Diepkloof Extension, also in Soweto. Secondly, the narrative's setting changes to Soweto where much of the action takes place. The detective, Mbhekeni Dlamini, stays in the East Rand

area at Spruitview which is part of the Natalspruit Township which is known as Katlehong. For this reason the narrative's setting occasionally moves to the East Rand. Thirdly, Mandlenkosi Mtshali is imprisoned in Baviaanspoort Prison in Pretoria, thus the setting also covers this area. Finally, the case ends up in the Bloemfontein Supreme Court. The settings are specific, hence they add to the realism of the plot.

Msimang has used these settings to make sure that certain actions are happening in the relevant place. For example, Soweto is the biggest township in the country and different kinds of people - good and bad people exist there. Such people are seen in *Walivuma Icala*. Serious cases end up in the Bloemfontein Supreme Court as it is the highest court in the country. Baviaanspoort Prison is one of the biggest prisons in Gauteng where people who are sentenced for serious offences are imprisoned. This prison is just outside Pretoria. These settings are used to serve these purposes in this narrative.

In terms of its placement in time, the narrative takes place in the present: characters in the narrative are staying in urban areas, they drive cars, they own businesses, they are studying in colleges and universities, they have professions such as being magistrates, judges, police, detectives and lawyers.

The criminal activities in this narrative involve a lot of trickery but lack a high level of sophistication. For example, in this narrative the police and the detective

are not using any sophisticated means of trying to discover who the murderers, or other suspected criminals, are. Even the criminals themselves do not apply sophisticated means of committing crime or in dodging the police. Everything is done in a simple way by the police, the detective and the criminals. This could be because modern technology has not been used to commit the crime.

Socially speaking, Msimang portrays a society which enjoys a Western lifestyle which believes in its own intelligence. This point is confirmed by the way Nsimbi Zwane and Jakes Dlamini conduct their criminal activities.

It is also confirmed that the setting can influence the believability of the narrative as well as simplify its comprehensibility to the reader:

"... when real streets, buildings, neighbourhoods, even trains and tramcars, add so greatly to believability, and, the fascination, of narratives particularly dependent on verisimilitude for their success" (Haycraft, 1942:243).

There is no doubt that Msimang's *Walivuma Icala* is a believable narrative due to its setting. This is caused by the fact that Msimang's setting includes a number of very well known areas in South Africa, for example, Soweto, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Katlehong, Bloemfontein and even legal institutions such as Supreme Courts and prisons. For example, Bloemfontein Supreme Court is known as the court of appeals where the most complicated cases are resolved. The Supreme Court in Pritchard Street in Johannesburg is well known and even people who have never been there, have heard of it or have read about it. Msimang uses the

real street names in his narrative in both cities and townships. Finally, what makes this narrative more believable is the way the legal part of it is handled. There are no short cuts, all is handled as if it is happening in real life. For example, people are tried in court, are represented by lawyers, sentenced, imprisoned and they are sometimes granted the right to appeal against the sentence. Cases are taken to the relevant courts and the convicts are imprisoned in the relevant prisons. This is a true reflection of real life as is known in South Africa.

As part of his/her setting, a detective story writer will need to specify the time and the place in which the story takes place. The characters have to compliment the time and place. For example, if detective narratives take place in urban areas, the characters should fit their surroundings. Thus, drug users may often be found in places like shebeens. The time and place is used to show that different communities act differently and again the relationship must correspond. For instance, an urban community co-operates easily with the police and they are so negligent in their conversations that they talk about anything, especially about the rumours from places like the shebeens. In such communities the detective finds it easier to follow the crime. However, in rural areas people are scared to talk to the police because they are scared to testify in courts. Such differences between the urban and the rural communities are to be used to its best advantage by the story writer.

The detective novel also often uses a lot of dialogue and flashbacks in order to provide information about past events. This is the technique which Msimang applied very well in this narrative. Flashbacks are well used - they inform the readers about the characters, their past activities and personalities.

### 3.3 Characterisation

Characterisation refers to the manner in which the writer shows the qualities, actions, utterances and reactions of the people in the narrative and how these cause characters to behave the way they behave, as individual human beings. It also looks at the interaction among the characters as natural and ordinary people with all the usual human attributes. Characterisation also embraces the manner in which the writer creates relationships among the characters in the narrative and the purpose for which they were created. Abrams supports this view, stating that the characters are:

"... the persons presented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with moral, dispositional and emotional qualities that are expressed in what they say - the **dialogue** - and what they do - re action. The grounds in the characters' temperament, desires, and moral speech and actions are called their **motivation**" (Abrams, 1971:23).

Msimang similarly defines characterisation as follows:

"Characterisation is the sum total of techniques employed by an artist in presenting characters in a literary work of art so that such characters are perceived by the audience / reader as persons endowed with moral and dispositional as well as physical qualities" (Msimang, 1987:99).

Forster (1947:65-75) famously groups the characters into flat and round characters. Forster's theory is later supported by Msimang (1987:102) who divides characters into types and kinds of characters. He says that the concept of types is concerned with the ultimate make-up of a character. The conventional approach is to divide characters into round and flat characters in accordance with Forster's theory.

- (a) **A Round character** can be defined as someone who is complex both in temperament and motivation. He is more like people in real life, capable of surprising the reader, and also not readily predictable. He might change under changing circumstances, and this changing character is sometimes described as a dynamic or revolving character.

In *Walivuma Icala* Msimang uses a number of characters as rounded characters of which Mandlenkosi Mtshali is the first noticeable one. In the beginning of the narrative, Mandlenkosi pleads guilty to the murder of Zinhle Mavundla:

" 'Yebo nkosi yenkantolo! Ngiyalivuma icala" ' (Msimang, 1996:2).

("Yes my Lord! I am guilty").

Mandlenkosi even refuses to accept the assistance which is offered to him by his sister, Thandeka and the detective, Mbhekeni Dlamini. Instead of co-operating with the lawyer, Mr Gasa, Mandla turns to his sister and says:

*" 'Kodwa nithandelani ukuphazamisa umoya wami, Thandeka? ... Koze kube kangaki nginichazela ukuthi angidinge mmeli?' "* (Msimang, 1996:42).

("Why do you like to disturb me, Thandeka? ... How many times must I tell you that I do not need any lawyer").

Later on in the narrative, Mandlenkosi changes. He is now prepared to co-operate with the lawyer, as he says to Nontobeko:

*" 'Ngizimisele ukubambisana nani kukho konke' "* (Msimang 1996:164).

("I am prepared to co-operate with you in everything").

Eventually, Mandlenkosi testifies in the Bloemfontein Supreme Court that he was telling lies by pleading guilty in the Johannesburg Supreme Court and he states his reasons for doing so:

*" 'Ngangiqamba amanga impela, Nkosi yenkantolo! ... ngangenzela ukusheshe ngihlangane nesithandwa sami uZinhle ngaphesheya kweliba. Nganginethemba lokuthi uma ngilivuma icala, ngizogwetshwa intambo ngithi ngingalengiswa umphefumulo wami udibane noZinhle, siqhubeke nothando lwethu. Nokho angigwetshwanga intambo, yilokho ngibone ukuthi kungcono ngivele ngikhulume iqiniso' "* (Msimang, 1996:208).

("I was really telling lies my Lord! ... I wanted to quickly meet my love Zinhle on the other side of the grave. I was hoping that if I pleaded guilty, I was going to be sentenced to death and after I have been hanged my soul will meet Zinhle, thereafter we would carry on with our love. Unfortunately I was not sentenced to death, it is for this reason that I decided to tell the truth").

This shows how this character changes as the narrative proceeds. In other words, this development is what is expected of the round character.

The other round character who is noticeable is Jakes Dlamini. Initially, this character tries to kill Mbhekeni Dlamini on the instructions of Nsimbi Zwane. Later on he works with the very same detective he tried to murder. He now warns Mbhekeni about the plan to murder Mandlenkosi:

*" 'Kunamathaka afikile athi kunethesho, mfethu. Athi kunenyoni efike ne 10 grandi yathi ifuna uMandla athwale umhlabathi ngesifuba ngokukhulu ukushesha. ... Nokho la mathaka abhulayindi kabi, mwethu. UMandla afuna ukumhlasele ekhaya ngozwaca. Uma ufuna ukuphephisa impilo yakhe kuyobangcono ubeseMofolo lingakashayi ihora lesi-7' " (Msimang, 1996:196).*

("There are certain gentlemen who arrived here to tell me that there is a job, brother. They said there is a certain fool who brought them ten thousand rand and asked them to kill Mandla very quick. ... But these gentlemen are very dangerous, brother. They want to attack Mandla at home tonight. If you want to save his life it will be better for you to be at Mofolo before 7 o'clock").

It is this change in Jakes which eventually led to the arrest of Mandla's would be murderers and later on to the solving of the case.

Nsimbi Zwane also partly falls in the round character category because after working closely for a long time with MaMchunu trying to kill Mandla and



Mbhekeni, he later tells the judge everything they did with MaMchunu which led to the killing of Zinhle Mavundla.

- (b) **A Flat character** is a character which is constructed around a single idea or quality and can be described in a single sentence. This means that he or she is either good or bad throughout the book. Such a character never develops, and is often said to be not true to life. Such a character is not capable of surprising the reader.

The characters which fall under this category in *Walivuma Icala* are Mbhekeni Dlamini, Nontobeko Mavundla, Thandeka Mtshali, MaSibiya Mtshali and Sis' Neli. All these characters want to see Mbhekeni succeeding and Mandlenkosi released. These characters remain positive towards both Mbhekeni and Mandlenkosi throughout the narrative. At no stage do they doubt Mandlenkosi's innocence and Mbhekeni's intelligence. Mbhekeni himself falls in this category because he remains clever, trusting Mandlenkosi and the girls and doing everything peacefully and legally throughout this narrative.

MaMchunu remains the worst character throughout the narrative. From the start, MaMchunu is seen swearing and she even slapped her daughter in front all the people in court. She bullies and forces her ideas onto others, people like Nsimbi Zwane. She steals her husband's money to give it to Nsimbi to use for criminal activities. Nsimbi gets deeper and deeper into criminal activities because he is

pushed by MaMchunu into all of this. It appears at the end of the narrative as if it was MaMchunu who was the mastermind behind all the crime taking place during the narrative and she used Nsimbi as her surrogate. Surprisingly, she is not even charged at the end of the narrative with any of the activities. These characters do not develop at all.

Under **kinds** of characters Msimang classifies characters according to their function in the story. Thus there are main characters, minor or secondary ones, foils, heroes and villains.

- (i) **Heroes:** a hero is the most prominent character in any story. Everything in the narrative is focused on him, and he is in the centre of things. He may win, in which case he is the hero in the true sense of the word, or he may lose, in which case he is **the victim**. In drama, such a character would be referred to as the protagonist. It should be remembered that the hero is not necessarily someone who is brave and noble: heroes may be good or evil, low or high born.

There is no doubt that Mbhekeni Dlamini is the hero in this narrative. Everything he does is successful at the end. He is very clever and a quick thinker. Mandlenkosi Mtshali is the victim because he suffers as a result of the crime he never committed.

- (ii) **The villain** is sometimes the antagonist. In prominence, the villain is second only to the hero. Both of them are main characters. The villain is

usually more bad than good. His purpose in the story is to thwart the very interests which the hero is trying to promote. This helps to intensify conflict and to generate suspense and tension, and the plot becomes more dynamic. Like a hero, a villain may be a single character or a group of characters.

MaMchunu and Nsimbi Zwane are the main villains in this narrative. They are more bad than good and all the time they oppose Mbhekeni's interests. In fact, these two characters are the main causes of all the evil which takes place in this narrative. It is because of their actions that Zinhle died, Mandlenkosi was arrested for the sins he never committed, Mbhekeni was injured, Mavundla lost his money and Simphiwe died.

- (iii) A **foil** is a minor or secondary character. It serves as a commentary upon, or a supporter of the hero or the villain. A foil may also be a single individual or a group of characters. In *Walivuma Icala* Msimang uses only one kind of foil: people who are on the side of the hero only. Thandeka and Nontobeko are the two main foils who assist the hero of the narrative, Mbhekeni Dlamini, from the beginning to the end. There is no evidence of a foil who assists the villains of the narrative, MaMchunu Mavundla and Nsimbi Zwane. Mavundla, who is supposed to be their foil, rebels against them towards the end of the narrative, which is one of the main reasons that leads to their arrests. Besides the foil, there are

usually quite a number of other minor characters which are only peripherally concerned with the theme. Such characters in *Walivuma Icala* are Mr Mavundla the butcher, who is the father of the murdered girl, and the husband of MaMchunu, who is one of the villains of the narrative, MaSibiya who is the mother of the accused victim Mandlenkosi Mtshali, Mr Gasa the lawyer who appears for Mandlenkosi Mtshali in court, Sis' Neli who is the secretary of Mbhekeni Dlamini, MaNkabinde Zwane who is the mother of the villain Nsimbi Zwane (who also constantly opposes the friendship of MaMchunu and Nsimbi) MaShange the mother of Mbhekeni who is worried about the dangerous job her son is doing, Mbatha the policeman who initially seems not to be happy with Mbhekeni's interference in the case of the murdering of Zinhle Mavundla, the Moloï and Mvubu families who are visited by Mbhekeni during his investigation, Mrs Ngubo who refers Mbhekeni to Mofokeng's house. MaMbanjwa Mofokeng who initially resists saying anything she knows and later on testifies in court that she saw Nsimbi Zwane killing Zinhle Mavundla, Songo the policeman who works with Mbatha and finally Simphiwe who is mistakenly killed instead of Mandlenkosi. All these characters play a minor role in this narrative.

This discussion, however, can be taken further by stating that the character is shown action just as much as action is a demonstration of character. Brooks and Warren's views are that:

"... for what a man is determines what he does, and it is primarily through what he does that we who observe him know what he is" (Brooks and Warren's, 1979:107).

What also needs to be taken into account is that a character does not exist in a vacuum. The person has an environment; he/she inhabits a place with special physical and social qualities. The degree of importance of place, like that of the importance of character, may vary from instance to instance depending on the creativity of the writer. This view aligns itself with Cohen's view about the characters which states that:

"The art of creating fictional characters in words which give them human identity is called characterisation. It is an art of illusion whereby the characters created seem to become people with traits and personalities which a reader can recognize, respond to and analyse" (Cohen, 1973:137).

What is also important to note is that all the elements of the narrative are interdependent and must be blended together, i.e. characterisation, a well developed plot structure, a suitable milieu (setting) and an effective narration. This will create a well rounded off narrative.

One may also point out that human beings are naturally and intensely interested in their own kind, and that all their lives they turn to marvel that nature has framed such strange creatures in her time. Perhaps another reason why human beings are more attracted to the characters than to other elements of a narrative is that to a very large extent these characters represent human vices and virtues

in life. To support this view one may mention the readers will always remember the novel by its characters. Many readers may easily forget the title of the novel but not the characters if they are well portrayed. In this regard Forster comments as follows:

"Since the novelist is himself a human being there is affinity between him and his subject matter which is absent in many other forms or art" (Forster, 1973:64).

Clearly, in general the characters of the detective novel must be realistic, that is the reader must be able to associate the role of the character with his or her in real life. Block (1975:68) emphasizes the importance of characterisation in the detective novel where he states that many writers' success in writing this kind of fiction "... relies on the clever intricacy of their plotting to hold the readers' attention, focusing on characterisation in the process." The researcher fully concurs with Block in this regard in the sense that the success of the detective novel depends on the portrayal of its characters.

In other words, each character must somehow believably and interestingly lead the detective to the next point in his/her investigation. This view is further supported:

"It is of course, entirely possible to write a successful mystery wherein the characters are merely symbols, two dimensional personification of virtues and vices to be moved within a puzzle plot until by the final page they fit the pattern of solution ..." (Mac Donald, 1976:113).

Mac Donald is emphasizing the point that even though there are many characters in the detective novel, and some are less important than others, yet at the end of the story the contribution of all of them should be recognized. Msimang applies all these techniques successfully in *Walivuma Icala* as indicated in the previous discussions.

As the detective novel is slightly different from the other novels, some scholars expect its characters to have certain requirements which make it to be more realistic than the historical and science fiction narratives. Aristotle in Winks (1980:33) points out the requirements of the characters in a drama as:

- (i) ... they must be good: even the most wicked of them must be endowed with some human dignity for us to take him seriously.
- (ii) ... they must be appropriate.
- (iii) ... they must be like reality: their mode of dress, language and behaviour should not be over-exaggerated but should be those of normal people that we interact with in daily life.
- (iv) ... they must be consistent from first to last: the development of a character should not bring about drastic changes. He should remain the person we have always known from the beginning to the end.

These may also be applied to fiction such as the detective novel. Four different techniques, each having advantages and disadvantages, are used to broaden the reader's perspective of the character. The first of these techniques is the author's viewpoint. When this technique is used, it is the author himself who informs the reader about the characters. This form of characterisation is direct (Marggraff 1994). Msimang states the following about the direct method of characterisation:

"Here the artist himself describes his characters. He tells you what they look like physically. If he adopts an omniscient point of view, he may even be more analytical, and tell you what they think and how they feel" (Msimang, 1987:99).

The following can be added to the above definition: "the author does not only tell the reader what his characters look like physically, but he may also relate other non-physical characteristics like kindness, cruelty, greed" (Marggraff 1994). Although Msimang applies this technique in *Walivuma Icala*, the researcher does not recommend it in a detective novel. The reason for this view is that the reader expects action from the detective novel. The reader wants to see the detective showing his/her skills in solving crime. There should be no time for discussing the physical and/or non-physical characteristics of the characters because that dilutes the action in the narrative. The reader creates his/her own image about the characters as the narrative proceeds.

A second characterisation technique is by using other characters' words. When this technique, which is a direct one, is used, characters say something about another character which is meant to characterise the latter. This type of characterisation in *Walivuma Icala* is not applied often. It is only applied once when Nontobeko and Thandeka are talking about MaMchunu over the phone. It is used regularly through the omniscient narrator.

The third technique used in connection with characterisation is his or her own words and actions. Sometimes the author makes his characters say or do things



which shape the character. The author can also use another character's point of view or report about character's through the words or actions of one of the minor characters. In such a case, the characterising instance is still the character's words or actions, and not the author's viewpoint or the other character (Marggraff 1994). Unfortunately, Msimang's application of this technique in *Walivuma Icala* is very minimal and the researcher regards it as a serious shortfall. Rather than the author him/herself discussing the characteristics of the characters, the more indirect technique is preferred because the reader creates his/her own image of the character. Msimang does not use this technique except in his delineation of MaMchunu who is portrayed as a cruel, talkative, rude bully. This type of delineation causes the reader to use his/her own imagination to develop the character.

The last technique used for characterisation is naming. Msimang states that characters are also characterised by their names, but that the Zulu novelist does not really use this technique a lot. Wellek & Warren (1996) claim that naming is the simplest form of characterisation. Naming provides the reader with another perspective of a specific character, and as do all the other techniques, contributes to a comprehensive portrait of a character (Marggraff 1994). An analysis of the names of the characters will not be done now as it is done in detail at the end of this discussion.

In the following discussion the researcher looks still more closely at the characters in *Walivuma Icala*. The analysis will be based on the techniques discussed above.

### 3.3.1 The Detective

The detective is the main character in the detective novel who, according to Pretorius and Swart (1982:6) should be "... the character around whom the whole story evolves ...". It is likewise maintained that a detective in fiction should be:

"the connector, ... His role requires that he meets people on a personal, in some ways intimate, basis, that he probes their pasts and possible sins, that he evaluate their character, and that he does these things in a relatively unrestricted manner ..." (Allen and Chako, 1974:214).

The importance of the detective in the detective narrative is further underlined thus:

"In any detective story worth its name, at once the most important and most difficult intrigue is the sleuth. The evolution of the fictional detective has been both a curious and a significant one" (Haycraft, 1942:229).

The detecting task was and still is difficult and dangerous to do, which has resulted in some scholars like commenting as follows:

"In all fairness, women and boys do not make satisfactory principal detectives. They must and often do, figure as important and attractive assistants. The beginner, at least will do well to confine them to such roles" (Haycraft, 1942:230).

One wonders whether such views are still accepted in a society like ours which strives for gender equality and the total uprooting of patriarchy. Maybe this is a challenge to the younger generation of the detective story writers, to write more and more narratives which have female detectives which play major roles. It has been proven in a number of jobs which were previously dominated by males that there is no job which a man can do that a woman cannot do. It is true that even today leading detective stories are those which have males as leading detectives. I do not know of any detective novel, which uses a female detective, except in a few American movies. Even in those movies women are the co-main characters working with males! This is a challenge which needs to be taken up vigorously.

One may conclude this argument by emphasizing the importance of the detective in the detective narrative: without a detective, there is no crime novel; or without a crime or mystery there is no detective; and without a detective being the dominating character in the novel, that novel is not a well written crime investigation novel.

A detective must also be intelligent in such a manner that he must be well clued up on how to handle his mission within the parameters of the law. A detective must not have any glaring weaknesses like being emotional when things do not go his way, he must desist from using violent techniques when seeking information, he must be polite and gentle. I also think that the most important

characteristics of a detective are that he should be able to face challenges, accept defeat when necessary, be able to keep secrets and be able to pretend to be happy when he/she is actually annoyed. At the end of the novel, the detective must emerge as a winner who wins very convincingly and without any doubt.

Msimang seems to adhere to all the definitions of the detective stated above. Mbhekeni Dlamini is the detective in *Walivuma Icala* and he is really the main character around whom the whole story evolves. His detecting job is dangerous and it could be for this reason that Msimang created a male detective, in line with Haycraft's (1942:230) views. Mbhekeni is intelligent and he is well clued up on how to handle his mission within the parameters of the law. He is not emotional and he does not use violence when seeking information. Mbhekeni seems to be a very good detective and it is for this reason that he emerges as a winner at the end of this narrative.

### 3.3.2 The victims

The victims are those who suffer because of the actions of someone else or of a group of people. The sufferings could be in the form of harm, emotional, psychological, physical or death. Other definitions of the victim(s) are as follows: **The Collins Concise Dictionary** (1986:1309) defines a victim as:

" a person or thing that suffers harm, death, etc."

About the victim in a detective narrative it is stated that:

"The victim has to try to satisfy two contradictory requirements. He has to involve everyone in suspicion, which requires that he be a bad character; and he has to make everyone feel guilty, which requires that he be a good character" (Auden in Winks, 1990:19).

Msimang also manages to meet these basic requirements for the victim.

*Walivuma Icala* has a number of characters which can be regarded as victims in terms of the above definition. For example, Zinhle Mavundla is killed for no reason at all. She is the first victim in this narrative. Thus, her suffering is physical. Mr Mavundla, the father of the murdered Zinhle, suffers emotionally and psychologically due to the untimely death of his daughter. Nontobeko is another victim who suffers psychologically and emotionally due to the death of Zinhle, who was her only sister and friend. Simphiwe who is not involved at all in this problem suffers death. He comes to the Mtshalis to tell his friend Mandlenkosi about the job he got for him and he is killed by the murderers who mistake him for Mandlenkosi. The detective himself, Mbhekeni Dlamini, at one stage becomes the victim who suffers harm when he is attacked by Jakes. He is even hospitalised for a few days after this incident. MaShange, the mother of Mbhekeni and Sis' Neli, the secretary of Mbhekeni become victims who suffer emotionally and psychologically after hearing about what happened to Mbhekeni. MaSibiya, the mother of Mandlenkosi is another character who suffers badly about what happened to her only son. At one stage she nearly lost her mind because of this incident. The last and the most notable victim in the narrative is

Mandlenkosi Mtshali. He goes through much trouble for no reason at all! He is charged with murder, he is imprisoned, there is an attempt on his life and worst of all he loses the woman he loves whole heartedly. He suffers emotionally, psychologically and he is also humiliated in the whole society. His arrest is a huge setback to his family.

### 3.3.3 The Criminals

The criminal is somebody who commits a crime against humanity, or the law that governs a particular society or country, but the crime committed could take place in many different forms. The most common crime which takes place in the detective narratives is murder: According to **The Oxford Advanced English Dictionary** (1986:1207) a murderer is a person guilty of murder, i.e. the unlawful killing of a human being.

Another comment on murder is that:

"Murder is negative creation, and every murderer is therefore the rebel who claims the right to be omnipotent. His pathos is his refusal to suffer" (Auden in Winks, 1980:19).

The well portrayed criminal in the detective narrative is one who keeps the reader guessing from the beginning of the narrative. The criminal must not be obvious in the narrative because this distorts the detection process, as is pointed out:

"In as much as the culprit is concealed among the characters in the modern detective novel, the temptation to the novice is to hide him by the very multitude of personae" (Haycraft, 1940:247).

What needs to be emphasized here is that the criminal needs to be concealed from the reader as well as from the other characters. If this is well done, the reader will find it difficult to put the novel down once she or he has started reading it.

A similar opinion is:

"The problem for the writer is to conceal his (murderer's) demonic pride from the other characters and from the reader, ..." (Auden in Winks, 1980:19).

The issue of murder and the murderer is summarized as follows:

"The murder is the act of disruption by which innocence is lost and the individual and the law become opposed to each other. In the case of the murderer this opposition is completely real (till he is arrested and consents to be punished); (Auden in Winks, 1980:20).

Although Msimang succeeds in concealing the real culprit who killed Zinhle, there are a number of loopholes. For example, right at the beginning of the narrative he portrays the sister of the victim, Nontobeko sympathising with the suspect who pleads guilty to murdering Zinhle. Nontobeko is even prepared to fight her mother back as she says to Thandeka:

" *'Uyazi mngani! Izwe lizothi ngiluhlaza kanti cha! Okunje angisoze ngikumele. Ngizogcina ngiziphindisele kumuntu engizala'* " (Msimang, 1996:9).

("You know my friend! People will say I am rude but in fact not! Something like this I will never tolerate. I

will end up fighting back somebody who is my parent").

This action by Nontobeko creates an impression that Mandlenkosi is not the murderer and that there could be another criminal somewhere who killed Zinhle. Nsimbi's threats to murder Mandlenkosi somehow create an impression that he is a criminal who is used to killing other people. If Nsimbi is not the criminal himself why does he not wait for the law to take its course?

Msimang further fails to create the usual role of the criminal by creating an impression that Mandlenkosi is not the criminal right at the beginning of the narrative. All the people sympathise with Mandlenkosi. For example the detective himself notices that Mandlenkosi is not the criminal:

*"Okokuqala nje ubuso bukaMandla abunazo nezincu izimpawu zobugebengu... Okwesibili, njengoba ebehlal ngezitebhisi nje, izinyembezi zona bezehla ngezihlathi kuhle kwezomuntu wesimane"* (Msimang, 1996: 3-4).

(First of all Mandla's face has no signs of being a criminal ... Secondly, as he was going down through the steps in this manner, tears were running down the cheeks like that of a female person).

The other criminal who plays a minor role in *Walivuma Icala* is Jakes Dlamini. This criminal appears once when he tries to kill Mbhekeni and he later changes, as he ends up working with Mbhekeni. The interesting part about the criminals is the way Msimang narrates how the criminals attacked Mtshali's house in their attempt to kill Mandla:



*"Iyanyelela yona le moto emnyama. Izinsizwa eziphakathi zizigqume ngamakhuphahethi, zivele ngamehlo kuphela. Ezandleni zigqoke amagilavu amnyama. Zonke lezi zinsizwa zixhake amavolovolo ahlohlwe. Zikhulumelaphansi. Umsebenzi eziwuqale ekuseni usuya ngase maphethweleni manje. Baqale ekuseni balandelama noMandla"* (Msimang, 1996:198).

(The black car is moving very slow. The young men inside it are wearing balaclavas, only their eyes are appearing. They are wearing black gloves on their hands. All these young men are holding loaded revolvers in their hands. They are talking softly. The job they started in the morning is about to be finished now. They started in the morning following Mandla).

This is a very interesting style which is usually seen in a lot of Hollywood movies. Fortunately these criminals do not succeed in killing Mandlenkosi because Jakes, who is supposed to be one of them, has already alerted Mbhekeni who eventually told the police about this mission.

#### 3.3.4 The Suspects

The suspects are the people who are suspected of having committed the crime(s) in a detective novel. Suspects can also be understood generally according to the definition which is given by **The Concise Oxford Dictionary** which explains a suspect as being a person:

"... of suspected character, subject to suspicion or distrust, not unimpeachable" (1986:336).

The suspects in *Walivuma Icala* are Mandlenkosi and the policeman, Mbatha. Mandlenkosi is the main suspect, created as such by Msimang as the narrative

starts when he is already charged for the murder of Zinhle Mavundla. He is the suspect around whom the whole narrative revolves, but is cleared at the end of the narrative when Nsimbi Zwane is arrested, charged with the murder of Zinhle Mavundla, and pleads guilty.

The second suspect is Mbatha, who is suspected of trying to kill Mbhekeni Dlamini. This suspicion is caused by the fact that he does not like Mbhekeni's involvement in the case of the murder of Zinhle. Mbatha goes as far as travelling from Hillbrow to Spruitview just to tell Mbhekeni not to interfere in this case. When Mbhekeni arrives at his house, he finds Mbatha already sitting in the lounge waiting for him:

*"Ekungeneni kwakhe elonji athole usayitsheni Mbatha emlindele. Nanxa ayesebenze ngaphansi kwakhe uShandu lona esiteshini samaphoyisa sase-Hillbrow, kuyacaca nje ukuthi namuhla akavakashile. Ukuthi uyimpi ukubona ngisho emehlweni lana afana nawemamba"* (Msimang, 1996:47-48).

(As he walks in the lounge he finds Sergeant Mbatha waiting for him. Although he (Mbhekeni) worked under Shandu (Mbatha's clan name) at Hillbrow police station, it is quite clear that he (Mbatha) is not visiting today. He is in a fighting spirit and that is visible in his eyes which look like those of a mamba).

Mbatha tells Mbhekeni to leave this case because he is handling it. When Mbhekeni refuses, Mbatha ends up by making threats that if Mbhekeni carries on with the case he will be "knocked over", a threat which means that a person will get in big trouble. It is for this reason that Mbhekeni says:

*"Mina, Shandu, bengicabanga ukuthi sobabili sinomgomo owodwa wokulwela ubulungisa nokuphepha komphakathi"* (Msimang, 1996:48).

("Shandu, I was under the impression that both of us are on the same mission of fighting for the safety and security of the society").

These threats cause the reader to suspect that Mbatha could be the one who attacked Mbhekeni. However, Mbatha is cleared when Jakes is arrested for attempting to murder Mbhekeni.

### **3.3.5 The Police**

The policeman is a member of an official police organisation who maintains law and order within the society or within the country as a whole. Thus, the policeman is not expected to be involved in crime. **The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary** explains the police further as

"Members of an official organisation whose job is to keep public order, prevent and solve crime, etc."  
(1986:347).

This confirms that a policeman is also not expected to take sides with any of the opposing sides, either the victim(s) or the criminal(s). This view is encouraged by the fact that it is only a magistrate who can decide in the court of law who is the victim and who is the criminal. Thus, the most important duty of the police is to do what is legally expected from her/him, which is to bring the criminal in front of the magistrate in the court of law.

After the murder of Zinhle Mavundla the police step in. Mandlenkosi is arrested. Unfortunately, Msimang seems to fail dismally in handling this part of his narrative. The role which is played by the police in this narrative is not quite clear. Yes, the police do a good job by working with Mbhekeni, they arrest Jakes and arrest the criminals who intend to kill Mandlenkosi Mtshali, but this they manage to do because they are helped by Mbhekeni. The reader expects to read more about the independent activities of the police. Where the police fails, the reader expects to read more about the reasons which cause them to fail in their duties. Generally, in most cases the reasons which cause the police to fail in their duties are blackmail, collaboration of the police with the criminals, a poor infrastructure like bad roads, the poor telephone service, a shortage of police cars or the incompetence of the police in doing their job. In *Walivuma Icala* all the above mentioned seem not to be the case. These policemen appear to be working under the instructions of Mbhekeni, the detective. They are not capable of solving any problem on their own. This is a failure on the part of the writer. Nevertheless, these police are still supposed to be the police who look after the well being of the society they serve.

### **3.3.6 The minor characters**

The minor characters are the characters who do not play major roles in the narrative. In most instances, they support the hero, or the villain or simply serve as a commentary upon events.

In *Walivuma Icala* there are a number of characters who can be interpreted as minor because of the roles they play. These characters do not contribute either to the conflict or the resolving of it. They just appear as members of a family, the neighbours, members of a group or just ordinary members of society. These minor characters are the two policemen who escort Mandlenkosi to the courtroom, MaSibiya the mother of Mandlenkosi and Thandeka, Mavundla who is the father of Zinhle and Nontobeko, the prison warder at the Baviaanspoort prison, the policemen in Johannesburg and Bloemfontein Supreme Courts, Simphiwe the friend of Mandlenkosi, Mtshali who is killed by mistake by the criminals, MaShange the mother of Mbhekeni, MaNkabinde the mother of Nsimbi Zwane, the residents of Mofolo Mvubu family, Mr Ngubo and Molois, the policeman Mathanda Zondi who took fingerprints from where Mbhekeni was attacked, Sibongile Msimang who directs Nontobeko to Baviaanspoort prison, Doctor Livingstone who did the post-mortem on Zinhle's corpse and the policeman Songo who works with Sergeant Mbatha.

### **3.3.7 The naming of characters**

A naming technique is partly used by Msimang as another form of characterisation in *Walivuma Icala*. What is noted in this technique is that names given to individuals often influence their personalities. A person's character is influenced by the meaning of his/her name. This technique may also include metaphors. This is a very common technique in the literature of African indigenous languages. However, Msimang applies this technique only to some

*Walivuma Icala* it becomes true that he manages to escape being killed by Nsimbi's killers and sentenced to prison only through the power of God. For the fact that a strange detective visits the court during his trial and voluntarily offers himself to help him free of charge, after noticing that he is innocent, can only happen through the power of God. Secondly, what is strange about this character is that he also escapes being killed without being alerted by anyone. The power of God must make Jakes Dlamini, the hired killer, refuse R10 000.00 for the killing of Mandlenkosi. All this can only happen through the power of God.

The name Thandeka means to be lovable. Everything that happened to this character seems to be influenced by her name. Firstly, she is lovable to her friend Nontobeko. At one stage Nontobeko threatens to fight her mother, MaMchunu if she carries on with her attempts to separate her (Nontobeko) from Thandeka. This action of Nontobeko shows how much she sees Thandeka as lovable. Besides threatening to fight her mother, Nontobeko tells Thandeka that her mother, MaMchunu will never succeed in separating them:

*"Akasoze asehlukanisa mngani wami. Lapho-ke ngiyakwethembisa Thandeka. Thina siyokwehlukaniswa wukufa kuphela. ..."* (Msimang, 1996:12).

("She will never separate us my friend. I promise you Thandeka. Till death do us part ...")

After meeting Thandeka for the second time, Mbhekeni notices that Thandeka is a lovable girl. He cannot forget about her.

*"... umfanekiso kaThandeka wawungafuni ukusuka emqondweni wakhe. Kwakungathi ingane yaseMatshalini inanyatheliswe kuye esiphongweni"* (Msimang, 1996:39).

(... the picture of Thandeka was not moving away from his mind. It seemed as if Mtshali's child was stuck on his forehead).

Even to MaShange, Mbhekeni's mother, Thandeka is lovable. It is for this reason that MaShange jokes with Thandeka calling her:

*" 'Hawu! Sawubona, makotshana' "* (Msimang, 1996:104).

(Hey! Hallo, daughter-in-law).

This joke of MaShange shows that she wishes Thandeka to be married to her son, Mbhekeni. Thus, there is no doubt that Thandeka's character is really influenced by her name because she is lovable to everybody, including her family.

Mbhekeni is a name in a plural form which means to watch him. In other words, this name appeals to the readers and the characters to watch Mbhekeni's actions. Mbhekeni's actions show that he is a kind person who is prepared to help other people. Throughout this narrative, Mbhekeni is seen as doing this. He offers to help Mandla and his family. He even persuades a lawyer, Mr Gasa, to appear in court on behalf of Mandla. He nearly loses his life because of helping other people. He really deserves to be watched.

On the other hand, Mbhekeni's name could be looked at as appealing to his ancestors and God to look after him and protect him against all the dangers and misfortunes in his life. This becomes real when Mbhekeni is nearly killed by Jakes and his friends, but his ancestors and God protected him. Mbhekeni is clever and successful in everything he is doing because his ancestors and God are watching over him, they are on his side. The name Mbhekeni influences his character.

The name Nsimbi means iron. One might expect people who are named Nsimbi to be strong, robust, savage and hardhearted. Although this does not mean that all the people who are named Nsimbi have all of these characteristics, in most cases they have some of them. In the case of Nsimbi in *Walivuma Icala*, he is portrayed as a hardhearted person. For example, he tells MaMchunu how he and his comrades will kill Mandlenkosi should he be granted bail:

*" 'Okuhle ngamakhomu wena mama, wukuthi nawo awathandi ukungcolisa izandla zawo. Wona eza nesigubhu sikaphethiloli kanye nethaya nedosha lika metshiso. Ayothi angaligaxa ithaya entanyeni, aligcwalise ngophethiloli, bese ephosela uMandla umetshiso. Nguyena-ke oseyozokhela, azibase, azose' " (Msimang, 1996:15).*

("What is very good about the comrades mother, is that they also do not like to dirty their hands. They just bring the drum of petrol, the tyre and the box of matches. After they put the tyre around his neck, sprinkle it with petrol, they will throw the box of matches to Mandla. He will then set himself alight.")



Nsimbi is also portrayed as a savage. He explains how he killed Zinhle, thus:

*" 'Angazi ukuthi umese ngawukhipha nini. Ngamgwaza ngaphansi kwebele wawela phansi ngoba sasikade sikhuluma simile. Ngakhwela phezu kwakhe ngamgwaza enqwababeni ngasemithombohini. Ngangithi kungcono afe kunokuthi aphelele kuMandla' "* (Msimang, 1996:213).

("I do not know when I pulled the knife out. I stabbed her below the breast and she fell down as we were standing talking. I climbed on top of her and I stabbed her in the collar bone. I preferred her to die than to end up with Mandla").

There is much detail which portrays Nsimbi as a very bad person from the beginning to the end of this narrative. It seems as if Msimang chose a name which suits this character well. Nsimbi is involved in the evil activities in this narrative, starting with hatred, attempting to kill and even killing, other people. Nsimbi is the only character who is associated with all the bad activities which take place in this narrative.

Nontobeko is a female name which means a humble person, a person who can control her feelings and temper: also a person who is not conceited because of her status in the society. In *Walivuma Icala*, Nontobeko is a character whose actions cannot be understood easily. Firstly, she appears for the first time in court sitting with the family of Mandlenkosi who is charged with murdering her sister, Zinhle. When Mbhekeni asks about the relationship between Thandeka and Nontobeko, Nontobeko ends up by telling Mbhekeni that:

*" 'Kanjalo futhi noMandla ungubhuti kithi sobabili' "*  
(Msimang, 1996:5).

("The same applies to Mandla: he is a brother to both of us").

Nontobeko is also portrayed as somebody a person can trust, as happens to

Thandeka:

*"Yize babe seyizingane bobabili kodwa uma enoNontobeko kwakuba sengathi unezinto zonke. UNontobeko wayeseyisiphephelo sakhe nethemba lakhe lokugcina" (Msimang, 1996:12).*

(Although they were both still young if she was with Nontobeko she felt as if she had everything. Nontobeko was her shelter and her last hope).

Nontobeko is from a very rich family and she stays in one of the best suburbs in Soweto but this does not change her personality. She is the friend of a girl from a poor family and she is not prepared to fall in love with the son of the well known medical doctor, Zwane.

After being punished by her mother, MaMchunu, in front of the strangers and the Mtshali family in court, Nontobeko takes no action and does not even shout back. She is the one who manages to persuade Mandlenkosi to co-operate with Mbhekeni and the lawyer, Mr Gasa. It is also Nontobeko who gets the truth out of Mandlenkosi that he did not kill Zinhle but that Mandlenkosi lied because he thought that he would be sentenced to death and for that reason he would meet Zinhle on the other side of the grave.

Nontobeko also encourages Mandlenkosi to ask for a job from her father Mr Mavundla and wishes him good luck:

*"Good luck, bhuti Mandla"* (Msimang, 1996:201).

(Good luck, brother Mandla).

At the end of the case Nontobeko is happy together with the Mtshali family that finally the truth is out. Now Nontobeko wishes her sister Zinhle to sleep in peace:

*" 'Namhlanje uzophumula ngokuthula umntakababa uZinhle, lapho ekhona. Nkosi! Makuthi imiphefumulo yabo bonke abedlulileyo, bekukholwa bekwesaba wena, iphumule ngokuthula kuze kufike isikhathi sokuvuka' "* (Msimang, 1996:218).

("Today Zinhle will rest in peace where she is. Lord! May the souls of all those who pass, believing in you, respecting you, rest in peace until resurrection day").

Although this character is too good to be true, it is interesting to see how much influence this name has on this character. She is really humble, not conceited, she is patient and always prepared to help wherever she can. One wonders whether there is such a person in real life. One feels tempted to regard this as an exaggeration of character personality by Msimang.

### 3.4 Conclusion

This section has shown that Msimang has managed, to a certain extent, to meet the requirements of setting and characterisation. His setting is realistic because

Soweto, the East Rand Johannesburg and Bloemfontein exist and are familiar settings which readers could familiarise themselves with easily. Characterisation is acceptable because it involves a variety of personalities as in real life. The notable problem about Msimang's characterisation is that it is one sided in most cases. The bad characters remain bad and the good ones, good. This characterisation makes the reader and the researcher doubt the credibility of such characters. The reader and the researcher expect to see the characters changing their personalities: from good to bad or *vice versa*. Although this is not always the case with all the characters at least one character is not expected to be either too good or too bad to be believed. What is interesting to note is that Msimang applies the naming of character as a characterisation technique to only those characters who are the backbone of the narrative and that their names suit these characters. The characters whose names mean good and clever behave as such. This a good application of the naming technique.

Before concluding this section of the study, one needs to make recommendations that the other most important issue which worries a number of readers is that detective novels have too many characters and some of them are useless. Whilst their claim is correct, it must be remembered that a detective novel should be seen as a microcosm of reality. Thus, in reality the detective seeks information from many people before the mystery is unravelled. The author of a detective novel must remember that some of his characters must appear more than others

whilst not forgetting that at the end of the novel the importance of all the characters should be recognized; even those who appeared only once.

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## **Chapter 4**

### **The Concept of Theme**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

It is believed that sometimes an author has an experience that he/she wishes to share with his/her readers. This experience, which is embedded in the story is called the theme of the story. The theme is not the topic of the story and neither is it the incidental, philosophical thought expressed in the story. The theme is the main or central element around which all events in the story should revolve. The centrality of the theme renders it the strongest binding force that keeps all the events of a story in place and in unity. The theme will thus uphold the cohesion of the story with all the events related to one another and the one event following the other. There are many definitions of theme in scholarly literature. Odham regards theme merely as a subject of writing, thought, conversation or argument (1956:1074), while Shipley goes further to say it is an underlying action of movement, as the general topic of which the particular story is an illustration, (1972:417). Theme is further defined as follows:

"The theme is the central idea, the basic issue with which the novelist or playwright is concerned, and on which he comments through the medium of his story" (Heese and Lawton, 1979:97).

The simplest definition of a theme is that which states that:

"The theme is the interpretation of life as conveyed by the story as a whole" (Pretorius and Swart, 1987:4).

This view is further broadened by Abrams who states that:

"Theme is sometimes used interchangeably with motif, but the term is more usefully applied on an abstract claim which an imaginative work is designed to incorporate" (Abrams, 1981:11).

All the above definitions of a theme show that theme is a very broad aspect of a narrative. It can also be subdivided into sub-themes. A detective novel covers a fairly wide thematic field. This field has been divided for convenience into four themes: (i) social problems, (ii) Zulu customs, (iii) didactic issues and (iv) comments on life, which should in no way be regarded as water-tight compartments. It must also be noted that some of these themes do overlap. As *Walivuma Icala* is a detective novel, it is important to start looking at the theme in a detective novel before proceeding to other sub-themes as they are depicted in the narrative.

#### **4.2 Theme in a detective story**

The main aim in a detective story is to unravel the crime committed. Thus, what is expected from the detective story is to focus on detection of a crime. The criminal should be exposed, brought to justice and be punished. The detective story must show the power of law. The criminal must not defeat the law

although he/she seems intelligent in the initial stages of the narrative. This view is supported as follows:

"... identity is the central theme of the detective novel, since the mystery of the criminals' identity is its *raison d'etre* ..." (Aisenberg, 1978:38).

Clearly in most cases a detective narrative's main theme is crime, often murder.

Haycraft states that:

"... murder has come to be the accepted theme of the detective novel, for reasons too numerous and obvious to require attention" (Haycraft, 1942:234).

Once the murder has taken place, the reader expects the detective to apply very sophisticated strategies of solving the problem. The innocent people must not be wrongly apprehended. Aisenberg describes the strategy thus:

"... the identities of the innocent bystanders are deliberately obfuscated to postpone the resolution and even the identity of the detective is sometimes withheld, if not from the reader, then from the characters" (Aisenberg 1978:39).

After the crime has been solved and the criminals arrested, it is important for the author to provide a clear picture of how the crime was committed. The reader expects to know about all the methods which the criminal applied when committing the crime. If a narrative ends up with the criminal being arrested but does not somehow explain the methods which were applied by the criminal then such a narrative is not well written. It seems Winks is of the same opinion in this regard as he states that:



"... the detective story is seen to be sensational because it focuses on the cause and methods of death rather than on the fact of death itself" (Winks, 1980:5).

The above discussion emphasizes the fact that this theme should have a direct link with what is happening in real life. This theme should represent a very loud societal cry against crime in general and a strong revulsion against murder in particular. This can only be achieved when the detective defeats the criminal. There should be in no way a criminal ends up winning. If that happens, the narrative will be regarded as a failure. Aydelotte confirms this view thus:

"... the detective story introduces a secure universe. We find here an ordered world obedient to fixed ways. The outcome is certain and the criminal without fail can be beaten by the detective" (Aydelotte in Aisenberg 1978:66).

The importance of the theme could be emphasized by stating that all events and incidents in the story should contribute to state the theme clearly and prominently to the reader. This will persuade him/her to read on.

#### **4.3 Theme in *Walivuma Icala***

Msimang's *Walivuma Icala* touches on a number of themes, but the most important ones are those which will be discussed below as they have some input in shaping the minds of the readers.

#### 4.3.1 Themes on social problems

In *Walivuma Icala*, Msimang looks at social problems as some of the main causes of the crime. In modern times people put class and status ahead of humanity. For example, in this narrative the Mavundla family belongs to the middle class. It is a rich family which owns a butchery business and stays in a big house in the middle class area called Diepkloof Extension in Soweto. Mavundla's daughter, Nontobeko, is studying at the University of the Witwatersrand doing a law degree and Mavundla's assassinated daughter, Zinhle, was studying medicine at the University of Natal.

The Zwane family also belongs to the middle class. Zwane is a respectable medical doctor who stays with his family in Diepkloof Extension next to the Mavundlas. Nsimbi Zwane is the son of a medical doctor and he is already driving an expensive car although he is not working yet. Nsimbi holds a B.A. degree from Vista University. On the other hand, the Mtshali family belongs to a very low class. This family stays in a rented four roomed house in Mofolo Soweto. Mtshali has passed away recently because his wife MaSibiya is still wearing her black clothes, the sign of a married woman who is still mourning the death of her husband. The daughter of the late Mtshali is studying for her teacher's diploma at the Soweto College of Education and her brother, Mandla is not working, nor does he have a degree or training. This family has no source of income at all. It is this difference between the middle class and the lower class families which causes all sorts of problems in this narrative. MaMchunu does

not accept the love affair which takes place between her daughter, Zinhle and Mandlenkosi Mtshali because he is from a poor family. MaMchunu states this to Nontobeko:

*"... Laba bantu bakwaMtshali baphansi kakhulu kanti thina siphezulu kakhulu. Siphakeme, Nonto, uyakwazi nawe lokho. Bangicasula kabi abantu bakwaMtshali ngokungazi isikhundla sabo emphakathini kwakhiwe. Bangakudla yini ukudla esikudlayo? Bangazigqoka yini izimpahla esizigqokayo? Nodadewenu, uZinhle, ngangihlale ngimdonsa ngendlebe ngithi akehlukane noMandla ngoba akekho ezingeni lakhe. Akangilalelanga, ...' " (Msimang, 1996:22).*

("... These Mtshalis are very low and we are too high. We are high, Nonto, you know that. They annoy me these people of Mtshali's because they do not know their place in the society. Will they manage to eat the food we are eating? Will they manage to wear the clothes we are wearing? Even your sister, Zinhle, I was warning her about Mandla telling her to forget about Mandla because he is not from the same class as hers. She did not listen to me ...").

It is this reason which causes MaMchunu to force her daughter to marry Nsimbi. She wants her daughter to marry into a family which belongs to the high class, and confirms her desire as follows:

*" '... Ngifuna ukuba kuthi lapho ngikhomba kwandodakazi ngikhombe izitezi; umuzi onamagalaji amathathu; umuzi onedamu lokubhukuda; umuzi onegede elivalwa livulwe ngogesi, umuntu avele acindezele inkinobho nje kube kuphela...' " (Msimang, 1996:24).*

("... I want that when I point to my daughter's place I point to a double story house; a house with three garages; a house with a swimming pool; a house with a remote controlled gate, where a person just presses the button and that is it ...").

Even Nsimbi Zwane ends up killing Zinhle Mavundla because he cannot stand competing for Zinhle with Mandla, a very poor man, a man who belongs to a very low class. This view confirms that class issues have great impact on all the decisions taken by MaMchunu and Nsimbi in this narrative. Nsimbi Zwane supports this view when he says:

" '... *Futhi ngangicasulwa wukubanga uZinhle nomfokazana onguMandla, impabanga uqobo lwayo* ' " (Msimang, 1996:212).

("... And I was annoyed by competing for Zinhle with a fellow like Mandla, a very poor commoner indeed").

Msimang succeeds in showing the interaction between social problems and crime in *Walivuma Icala*. Msimang highlight other themes as well. These are analysed in the following sections.

#### **4.3.2 Themes on Zulu customs**

Msimang is also looking at the problems which are caused by trying to mix modern life and Zulu traditional customs. During the olden days parents, especially mothers, used to choose for their daughters whom they should marry. Parents of both the girl and the boy used to meet first, discuss the marriage between their children and thereafter approach the children if agreement was reached. This was an acceptable custom amongst the Zulus. Today this culture is no longer acceptable as there is a belief that nobody can interfere in the love affairs of another person, not even parents. MaMchunu, the mother of the Mavundla girls, is somehow seen as trying to practise this culture of choosing for

her daughters, forgetting that this culture is no longer acceptable. MaMchunu tells Nsimbi that:

*" '... Wena, Nsimbi, mhlawumbe awazi. Ngakukhetha ulusana uzelwe. Mhla uzelwe yimina engangehla ngenyuka noyihlo, udokotela Zwane, sithenga amanabukeni, amabhibhi, iminxumo, nezingubo. Kwathi sesikulandile nonyoko ekliniki, nganele ngakuthi nhla nje ngathi uyoba ngumkhwenyana wakwami. ...Okuhle wukuthi ngisho abazali bakho bayazi ukuthi ngangingadlali' " (Msimang, 1996:16-17).*

("... You, Nsimbi, maybe you do not know. I chose you when you were still an infant after your birth. The day you were born it was me who was up and down with your father, Dr Zwane, buying napkins, bibs, dummies and the clothes. On the day we fetched you and your mother from the clinic, I looked at you once and I said you will be my son-in-law. ... What is good is that even your parents know that I was not joking").

After talking to Nsimbi, MaMchunu is now talking to her daughter Nontobeko about her wish in the passage below. Nontobeko does not accept that her mother chooses her husband. She becomes very annoyed with her mother.

*" 'Mama, usho ukuthi ufisa ukuthi mina ngigane uNsimbi Zwane?' " (Msimang, 1996:23).*

("Mother, you mean that you wish me to marry Nsimbi Zwane?").

Nontobeko emphasizes her disapproval of her mother's wish by warning her mother that she (Nontobeko) will even fight Nsimbi should Nsimbi try to propose to her:

*" 'Uma eke walokotha wangitshela lowo doti ngiyokhumula isicathulo ngimgqeme ingozi ngehili. Uma umthanda ngempela kobangcono umdonse ngendlebe angadlaleli ngakwezothando uma enami. Kuyoze kube nini mama usikhethela? Siyoze siyithole nini thina inkululeko yokuzikhethela?' "* (Msimang, 1996:23).

("If he may dare tell me that rubbish I will take my shoe off and make a big wound on his head with the heel of the shoe. If you dearly love him you better warn him not to talk about love if he is with me. Till when will you keep on choosing for us, mother? When are we going to get freedom to choose for ourselves?")

It is clear that through this argument between MaMchunu and her daughter, Nontobeko, Msimang shows that this Zulu custom is in fact outdated. It will never work during modern times. It is also due to this custom that Zinhle died: Msimang issues a strong warning about this custom.

Msimang is also looking at another Zulu custom which is known as **ukuvusa umuzi** (to revive the family that is dying out). This was the Zulu custom where the sister of the dead woman was married by the same man who was married to her sister. This custom was practised by married people only. In this narrative MaMchunu wants her daughter, Nontobeko to marry Nsimbi who was initially "in love" with Zinhle, the late sister of Nontobeko. MaMchunu tells Nsimbi to marry Nontobeko and Nsimbi is shocked to hear this because he has never heard of this practice before. MaMchunu tells Nsimbi that it is a Zulu custom:

*" '... NgesiZulu sinalo isiko lokuvusa umuzi. Ngalelo siko uma indoda ishonelwe ngumkayo iye iphindele ekhweni ikhulume nomlamu wayo omncane imnxuse*

*ukuba azovusa umuzi kadadewabo. Ayikho nencane inkinga lapho' "* (Msimang, 1996:17).

("In Zulu we have the custom of reviving the family that is dying out. With this custom when a man loses his wife through death he returns to his in-laws and asks the younger sister of his wife to come and revive the family of her sister [in other words, the younger sister is asked to marry her late sister's husband: **comment by me**]. There is not even the slightest problem about that").

Another Zulu traditional custom which Msimang explores in relation to crime is the one known as **ukuthwala umfazi** (take a woman without agreement). It was an acceptable custom for the Zulu for a woman to be taken by a man to his house or his family without agreement and thereafter for the man to send **abakhongi** (bride price negotiators). This custom was practised when the woman did not accept a marriage proposal from the man or when the man was about to lose the woman he had been proposing love to, to another man. After the woman had been taken without an agreement she would then agree to be married after the man had given **ilobolo** (bride price) to her parents.

This custom was changed by the interference of the western laws which interpret it as kidnapping. The Zulus later changed the practice slightly. Instead of taking the woman without agreement they just send the bride price negotiators (**ilobolo** negotiators) to the family of the woman to negotiate the **ilobolo** (bride price) without an agreement between the man and the woman. If the parents of the woman accept the **ilobolo** (bride price) it will then be up to them to persuade

their daughter to accept the marriage. It seems MaMchunu is telling Nsimbi to do this because he is about to lose Nontobeko to a strange man. As she says:

" 'Kukangaki ngikutshela ukuthi thumela abakhongi' "  
(Msimang, 1996:17).

("How many times did I tell you to send the bride price negotiators").

This custom does not materialise in this narrative. Msimang makes the point that this custom is no longer accepted by the modern generation. It can also lead to crime and because of this, if for no other reason, it must be stopped. The way this custom can lead to crime is because the parents may be interested in accepting **ilobolo** (bride price) and their daughter may not be interested in the man. This could result in problems because the man may end up taking the woman by force claiming that he paid **ilobolo** (bride price) thus the woman is his wife. By law this action will be interpreted as kidnapping, which is a crime. Besides this, this custom may simply be misunderstood, as happens in the case of MaMchunu in *Walivuma Icala*.

What is noticeable in the above discussion is that Msimang makes the strong point that modern Zulu people do not understand how and when certain Zulu traditional customs were practised. Modern Zulus try to practice their traditional customs only when it suits their desires and they practice such customs incorrectly. Msimang warns that such practices may lead to criminal activities today and people must stop doing it!



### 4.3.3 Themes on didactic issues

Although Msimang has written nothing that is directly didactic, both themes that are already discussed have didactic implications. The way Msimang handles the main theme of crime and sub-themes such as social problems and Zulu customs reflects his inclination to educate rather than to discuss fancy. All these themes are, in fact, comments on the social problems which the modern African people are faced with. He thus indirectly warns the people about these social issues and how to handle them. For example, he educates the people to respect and treat other people equally, irrespective of their class and status. He uses the character MaMchunu, who belongs to the middle class, to show that class and status do not mean that those who belong to the lower class should be treated differently. Msimang wants the rights of the lower class people to be respected too. It is for this reason that MaMchunu and Nsimbi become unsuccessful in everything they are doing, although they belong to the upper class. MaMchunu loses her daughter, Zinhle in the process and her "son-in-law", Nsimbi Zwane, ends up in prison. Msimang also exposes the corruption of the upper class. MaMchunu is a very corrupt woman who is not ashamed of stealing a hard-earned R10 000.00 from her husband and giving it to some killers to kill an innocent person.

As Nsimbi confirms this in court:

" '... Nguyena owanginika uR10 000.00 wathi  
angithenge izigebengu ziyobulala uMandla ...' "  
(Msimang, 1996:214).

("It is she who gave me R10 000.00 and asked me to get the killers to kill Mandla").

MaMchunu's corruption goes further. She asks Nsimbi to rape and impregnate her daughter, Nontobeko. Nsimbi confirms this too, in court:

" '... *Wayethi angibambe uNontobeko ngimkhulelise*  
...' " (Msimang, 1996:214).

("She said I must rape Nontobeko and impregnate her ...").

Nsimbi himself is a person who belongs to the upper class. He is the son of a well known and rich medical doctor in Soweto and he is educated, yet he allows himself to be used by MaMchunu. Maybe Msimang uses the character of Nsimbi to educate and warn readers that even educated people fail to employ reason sometimes. If Nsimbi used reason he would have accepted that Zinhle did not love him. He should not have gone as far as taking Zinhle's life.

Msimang also educates his readers about the importance of not trying to mix a modern way of life with Zulu traditional customs. He discourages the parents from choosing partners for their daughters and sons. MaMchunu tries to practise this custom but she seems not to understand how it works. Instead of talking to the parents of Nsimbi first, she talks to Nsimbi. In other words, Msimang advises the readers to practice the customs they understand and which are acceptable to them. Msimang further warns the readers not to practice the traditional Zulu customs only when it suits their agendas. The Zulu custom

which is known as **ukuvusa umuzi** (to revive the family that is dying out) seems to be wrongly understood by MaMchunu but she insists on it in order to achieve what she wants. MaMchunu tells Nsimbi to talk to Nontobeko to accept marrying him, because by so doing Nontobeko will be reviving the family. Here, MaMchunu shows some lack of understanding of this custom because it was practised by married people, not by boyfriends and girlfriends.

Msimang also educates his readers that crime does not pay. One can commit all sorts of crime hoping that he/she will manage to hide it but one day all will come out. To illustrate this point, one could mention MaMchunu. She is the main person behind all Nsimbi's activities but eventually everybody knows that she is the main instigator. Nsimbi killed Zinhle hoping that nobody will know, but at the end everybody knows.

To sum up all that is said so far about themes on didactic issues, one may state that Msimang educates his readers about the importance of sticking to what one knows better. One must not try to live in two different worlds like MaMchunu tries to. She tries to practice Zulu traditional and modern customs just to achieve her desires. This type of living does not produce any goods at the end except that one may end up losing even that little he she has. MaMchunu is a good example of this view in *Walivuma Icala*. She loses her daughter, husband and the comfort of being middle class. MaMchunu's situation, at the end of the narrative, reminds one of an old Zulu saying that **alikhho iqili elazikhotha emhlane** (there

is no crafty person that can lick himself/herself on the back). This view is encouraged by the fact that MaMchunu instigates Nsimbi to commit all sorts of crimes but eventually everybody knows that she is the mastermind behind all the crimes committed by Nsimbi. Indeed crime does not pay.

#### 4.3.4 Comments on life

Through *Walivuma Icala*, Msimang also makes a number of comments on life. The first comment which is clearly depicted is that people must know and accept that in life one cannot always get everything that he/she wishes. MaMchunu desires that her daughters be married into rich families and even be friends with the children of rich families, but Nontobeko denies her mother's wish:

*" 'Angikholwa mama ukuthi ubungani buhambisana nemali. Kusuke kungebona ubungani beqiniso lobo. Mina engikwaziyo wukuthi ubungani busuka enhliziyweni; kanjalo nothando' "* (Msimang, 1996:23).

("I do not believe mother, that friendship goes with money. That will not be a genuine relationship. What I know is that a relationship starts from the heart; the same applies to love").

MaMchunu does not want to accept that what she wishes will never happen. It is for this reason that at the end she finds herself in such big trouble. Then Mavundla knows that she (MaMchunu) stole his R10 000.00:

*" 'Imali engaka! Ubucabanga ukuthi angeke ngikubambe! Imali yami engaka! Uzowukhomba umuzi onotshwala wena!' "* (Msimang, 1996:214).

("Such a lot of money! You thought that I will never catch you! Such a lot of my money! You will be in big trouble!")

Mavundla also knows that MaMchunu is the main cause of his daughter's death.

This causes trouble for herself because she failed to accept that life is a win-lose situation. Mavundla wants his daughter back from MaMchunu:

*" 'Iphi ingane yami? Ubulalisa umntanami ujika uba nesibindi sokuhlala emzini wami? Uphi uZinhle? Uzomkhipha umbeke la, kungenjalo uzomlandela!' "*  
(Msimang, 1996:214).

("Where is my child? You had my child killed and you are still brave enough to stay in my home? Where is Zinhle? You will bring her here, if you do not, you will follow her!").

MaMchunu now realises that all she did was wrong, but it is too late. She is scared to go to her home because Mavundla might kill her. She apologises to her daughter, Nontobeko but Nontobeko does not seem responsive.

Msimang also uses Mandlenkosi to show that in life a person may not always get what he/she wants. Mandlenkosi had already committed himself to Zinhle; he regards her as his future wife but something else happens. Zinhle is killed and Mandlenkosi fails to accept this. It is for this reason that he wants to be sentenced to death so that he can meet Zinhle on the other side of the grave, but as is clear, Mandlenkosi's wish does not materialise. At the end, the truth comes out.

Throughout this narrative, Msimang constantly mentions the power of God, quotes from the Bible and some well known hymns. This is another way of commenting on life. In other words he tells his readers that they must put God first, and must accept what happens, happens because God wishes it so, and should be thanked for all that happens, whether it is good or bad. Msimang's comments are true to real life situations. Although it is presumed that most of Msimang's readers are Christians one needs to acknowledge that South Africa is in the transformation stage, education in particular, where most of Msimang's readers are. Different people who are from various religious backgrounds are now getting more and more involved in studying isiZulu literature. For this reason, it is perhaps not a good thing for an author to quote one type of religious text because that makes other religious groups feel discriminated against.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

It is true that the detective novel is basically designed to be entertaining to the reader and writer, but it may be reinforced by its practicality. The shrewdness or efficiency with which the writer presents his/her matter decides for how long it will keep ringing in the reader's memory, and resist being pushed into oblivion by newer publications or writings. Besides the main theme of crime, the other themes handled should be meaningful to the reader by being true to life as he/she sees it. This characteristic comes out strongly in Msimang's detective novel, especially on the themes of Zulu customs, social problems and other didactic issues. *Walivuma Icala* depicts life truly and honestly. This narrative shows

clearly that Msimang is concerned mainly with human nature and life, if one takes into consideration all the sub-themes which Msimang handles. His deep concern is genuine and pertinent. Msimang philosophises about life in his typical calculated manner. The vanity of the civilised, rich and educated person that so disturbs Msimang is a common feature of modern times. His unique reaction to this vanity, strikes the reader with vivid freshness, and is logically in keeping with modern times. Msimang does not just ridicule man's folly, but shows his and another man's way of reasoning, thereby easily gaining credibility for the point he wishes to put across.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

#### 5.1 Introduction

In this section of the study, the researcher concludes the study by making some comments on what he regards as strong and weak points in Msimang's detective novel. The researcher will also try to read between the lines, trying to establish why Msimang does some things and not others in this novel. General comments will be made on formal elements of this novel, on its criminals, minor characters, the police, the exposition, incidents, climax, plot structure, tension, and the general flaws will be noted. The researcher will further comment on the credibility of this novel as a whole.

#### 5.2 General Overview

It has already been stated that isiZulu literature (if not isiNguni literature as a whole) has very few attempts in this genre, as the first attempt appeared in print for the first time in 1990. It was M. M. Masondo's **Iphisi Nezinyoka** (The Hunter and the Snakes) and not D. B. K. Mhlongo's **Itshe Eliyigugu** (The Precious Stone) as stated by D. B. Ntuli and N. M. Makhambeni (1998:193) who remark that:

"Indaba ka D.B.K. Mhlongo ethi **Itshe Eliyigugu** (1991) ingena emgudwini ongejwayelekile



wezincwadi zesiZulu [which is a detective novel: my emphasis] ... Indaba enazo zonke izimpawu zenoveli yophenyo isichunyiswa nguMeshack Masondo. Incwadi yakhe yomphenyi ethi **Iphisi Nezinyoka** (1990) iyindaba yomphandi uThemba Zondo ..."

(D. B. K. Mhlongo's narrative entitled **Itshe Eliyigugu** [The Precious Stone] [1991] belongs to an unusual category of isiZulu books [which is a detective novel: my emphasis] ... The narrative which has all the characteristics of a detective novel is improved by Meshack Masondo. His detective novel entitled **Iphisi Nezinyoka** [The Hunter and the Snakes] is a story of the detective Themba Zondo ...)

It is not clear why the said writers decided to claim that Masondo improved on Mhlongo, although Masondo's work appeared in print first. Even Marggraff (1998) cited earlier, disagrees with them. It is for this reason that Msimang's attempt in producing this detective novel, *Walivuma Icala* deserves to be appreciated. Even if there are some flaws in the "Rules of the game" here and there throughout the narrative, this does not in any way whatsoever discredit Msimang's fairly good effort. Even those critics who argue that writing a detective novel is simple, are condemned:

"... this sort of ingratiating but essentially false humility has been to convince much of the public that the execution of the detective story is child's play, something that may be accomplished almost at will by any one who wishes to take the required time" (Haycraft, 1942:224).

One feels compelled to agree with Haycraft's statement and for this reason to congratulate Msimang for writing this novel although it is his first attempt in this

genre. Msimang has managed to follow many of the conventions of a detective novel discussed earlier in this study. This novel is educative, magnetic and fascinating. It activates the reader's power of rational thinking and reasoning. It also enhances the reader's ability to form conclusions. There is no doubt that it will influence the increase of such works in the isiZulu language.

What needs to be appreciated further in this novel, that makes it fairly successful, is that Msimang has managed to blend together all the formal elements of this kind of a novel to contribute to the development of its themes. He has also managed to handle the themes so well that the reader is able to understand other formal elements. The events in the novel are also carefully worked out to revolve around the main theme of crime so as to bring it out clearly to the reader, to persuade him/her to read further.

Msimang has also managed to portray the criminals in a convincing manner. They are all scared of suffering or punishment. For example, Jakes Dlamini becomes a witness against his own friends in order to avoid suffering. Nsimbi Zwane decides to tell the whole truth in order to avoid drastic punishment and MaMchunu is scared to go back to her family after the final court case. Msimang has also managed to a certain extent to conceal the murderer from the reader as well as the other characters. This strategy is effective because it is the only tool that can grip the reader's attention and keep him/her in suspense.

The portrayal of minor characters throughout the narrative, is most appropriate. For example, MaSibiya, who is the mother of Mandlenkosi and Thandeka, is portrayed as a woman who has recently lost her husband through death. This technique is used by Msimang to emphasize the troublesome situation of the Mtshali family. Sis' Neli has also been portrayed as a very dedicated employee of the private detective, Mbhekeni Dlamini. This character has been created by Msimang just to serve as a connector between Mbhekeni and the outside world when he was in hospital. This character also serves as a clear microcosm of Mbhekeni's office. She shows that Mbhekeni's office is disciplined and dedicated to the needs of its clients, as Sis' Neli goes as far as using her own car and petrol to help Mbhekeni's clients. This would be an unusual incident in the real life situation. Simphiwe is another minor character who is specifically employed to facilitate the unsuccessful attempts to kill Mandlenkosi by Nsimbi Zwane and thus to increase the complicatedness of the detective narrative. This is also confirmed by Nsimbi Zwane in court when he testifies that:

" '... uSimphiwe yena ngangingenandaba naye, ngangihlose uMandla. Kwasho umama uMaMchunu ukuthi angimbulale uMandla ...' " (Msimang, 1996:213).

("... I had no business with Simphiwe, I was aiming at Mandla. I was told by mother MaMchunu that I must kill Mandla ...").

Msimang has also successfully used the services of the professional police force. In this case, Msimang does not make the police appear very prominent in the

investigation process so as not to steal the lime-light from the detective, Mbhekeni Dlamini who is the principal hero of the narrative.

The exposition phase is simple, interesting with humour and suspense and not elaborate. Msimang leaves the reader to make his/her own deductions as to the personalities of the characters. Dialogue is the main device that Msimang uses to reveal the traits of his characters, particularly those of MaMchunu and Mbhekeni Dlamini. MaMchunu is portrayed as a very rude person who is also full of hatred towards the Mtshali family. When she finds Nontobeko, her daughter and the Mtshali family, she does not greet them but talks rudely, harshly to Nontobeko and hits her:

*" 'Awunamahloni wena Nontobeko. Obani bakwa bani laba osushomene nabo? ... Ucabanga ukuthi babulala udadewenu nje wena bazokuyekelani? Emotweni wena njengamanje ... Emotweni wena. Uma ungayizwanga inhlanekela yokuqala ngizokuphinda' "* (Msimang, 1996:5).

("You are not ashamed of yourself Nontobeko. Who are these people you have befriended? ... Do you think that they killed your sister; why would they not kill you too? In the car, you, now! ... If you did not feel the first back of the hand smack I will smack you again").

On the other hand Mbhekeni is portrayed as the opposite of MaMchunu. He is respectful, polite, clever and analytical. When Mbhekeni sees Mandlenkosi appearing for the first time in court, he applies his skills to note the personality of Mandlenkosi:

*"Okukuqala nje ubuso buka Mandla abunazo nezincu izimpawu zobugebengu. ...Uma kungukuthi ngempela lo Mandla wambulala ngempela uZinhle, kusho ukuthi wambulala ngaphansi kwesimo esingejwayelekile neze neze. Wafisa ukwazi ngaleli cala". (Msimang, 1996:3-4).*

(First of all Mandla's face has not even small features of a criminal. ... If it means that this Mandla really killed Zinhle, it means that he killed her under very, very strange circumstances. He wished to know about this case).

After the court case has been postponed, Mbhekeni politely greets MaSibiya, Thandeka and Nontobeko. He introduces himself to them as follows:

*" 'Sanibonani makhosazana, nawe mama' ... Afake isandla ekhukhwini lebhantshi uMbhekeni aphume nekhadi elinegama nekheli lakhe kanye nencazelo yokuthi ungumseshi ozimele. "Niyongixolela, bandla, ngokuba ngugaxekile odabeni lwenu. Ngenziwa wusizi nomunyu kanye nendlela nje engithinteki ngayo nxa ngikuzwa uqhumuka ukhala." Ngaleso sikhathi wayeqhubeka exhawula ...' " (Msimang 1996:4).*

("Hallo ladies, and you mother" ...Mbhekeni puts a hand in the pocket of his jacket, he takes it out with a card which has his name on, address and the information that he is a private detective. "You will forgive me for imposing myself on your affair. I was deeply touched when I heard you crying." During that time he was continuing shaking their hands ...").

Msimang has manipulated various incidents to flow together, well blended in a unison that leads to a convincing climax and ultimately to a satisfactory conclusion. Each stage can easily be noted. This results in a clear plot structure which can simply be demarcated into the beginning, the middle and the end.

Even the complication phase is well depicted. It is re-inforced by several incidents that build tension whilst drawing the interest of the reader. In most instances, this tension is relieved by the use of humour:

*"Esifubeni lapha ingumabele made. Yilolu hlobo oluncelisa umntwana esemhlane"* (Msimang, 1996:5).

(On her chest she is long breasted. She is that kind which can breastfeed the child while it is on her back).

This use of humour to relieve tension is also noted when the police are arresting the would-be murderers of Mandlenkosi Mtshali after they have murdered Simphiwe:

*"Akabange esabuza umfoka Mbatha owayeseduze. Wayishaya amathayi omane yahlalisa okwesishosha phansi. Waphinda wasakaza ifasitela langaphambili inhlamvu yadlula nendlebe yomshayeli"* (Msimang, 1996:199).

(He did not waste time, the son of Mbatha who was nearby. He shot all four tyres and the car sat down like a crippled person. He also shot the windscreen and the bullet passed through the driver's ear).

Each important incident in the novel contributes to the plot structure. The tug-of-war is one of wits, with the police outwitting the would-be murderers. These murderers felt helpless, beaten and dejected when the police had so outwitted them that they had to give up their arms:

*"Ebona ukufa sekumgojela waphuma eqhasha emotweni, wajikijela isibhamu laphaya kude, waphakamisa izandla ecela umaluju. Ababili abase behobe ngodonga nabo benzenjalo, asondela amaphoyisa ababopha"* (Msimang, 1996:199).

(Seeing the death about to take him he quickly went out of the car, threw his gun far away, lifted his hand up asking for forgiveness. The two which were hiding by the wall also did the same, the police came closer and arrested them).

Msimang's novel really plays fair because all the clues are laid bare before the reader. All evidence is known to the detective and there are no false clues. There is unity of mood, characters, dialogue, milieu, style and the persona of the detective hero. They all form a coherent whole.

Although Msimang seems to be fairly successful in writing this novel, there are some flaws which need to be noted as well. For example, Mbhekeni Dlamini as an amateur detective, has not been created in accordance with the stipulations of scholars such as Haycraft and others. His manner of detection is not quite methodical and lively and it does not satisfy the dictates of Allen and Chacko when they point out:

"... the detective then follows up quietly from clue to clue till the problem is solved, the reader accompanying the great man in his search" (Allen and Chacko, 1974:360).

These are rules which are not properly applied by Msimang in his detective narrative. Only in a very small part of the novel, which is about a page, is Mbhekeni Dlamini seen logically following the clues in Mofolo and thereafter everything just happens co-incidentally. This is not a good detection process. Msimang fails dismally in this part. In other words, what Haycraft says is true, that the most important and most difficult intrigue in a detective novel is that

surrounding the detective hero himself. Indeed Mbhekeni Dlamini as a detective features badly in this novel. He is not the readers' detective hero whom Msimang has depicted so well at the beginning of the narrative. As the narrative progresses, Mbhekeni fails to show the detection skills of the detective that readers expect to see because his detection is somehow not satisfactory. For this reason Mbhekeni Dlamini, as portrayed by Msimang, may not be the ideal and perfect detective:

"Completely satisfactory detectives are rare. Indeed I know of only three: Sherlock Holmes (Conan Doyle), Inspector French (Freeman Will Crofts), and Father Brown (Chesterton)" (Auden in Winks, 1980:20).

Although Mbhekeni plays a very important part in the story he fails to coerce the reader to identify with him and take him very seriously. He also doesn't get into very risky and breath-taking situations in the process of his investigations as would be expected. A risky situation occurs in only one incident where Mbhekeni is attacked by Jakes. His lifestyle and reactions are not those of the ordinary detective that the reader expects to see.

Msimang also fails in his depiction of MaMchunu, who masterminded and instigated all the crimes committed in this narrative. She receives no punishment at the end of the narrative except that Mavundla, her husband tells her never to come back to his house and it ends there. This is not likely in real life situations. Although there is a belief that one should get his or her share of legal punishment for the role played in crime, the researcher does believe that a good detective



novel should avoid punishing the guilty characters because as stated earlier on, the sentence might not be expected by society. This view does not allow that a guilty party should be seen getting away with murder as happens with MaMchunu.

Msimang also has a habit of using an omniscient narrator excessively. According to the researcher's view omniscient narrator usage should be limited so that the reader will be guessing some of the answers, which might be proven wrong or right at the end of the story. In most cases omniscient narrators do this work for the readers. For this reason the fascination of the detective novel is destroyed.

Another flaw is that Msimang's detective hero is seen opposing the person who testifies in court that he is the guilty person. If Mandlenkosi testifies he murdered Zinhle, what legal proof does Mbhekeni have that Mandlenkosi is lying? Does Msimang imply that the police can rely on facial expressions to conclude who is wrong or right? Although Msimang tries to defend his portrayal by stating that:

*"UMbhekeni izigebengu lezi wakhula ngazo. Waqala eseyiphoyisa ukuzingelana nezigebengu, kungongaphansi nongaphezulu. Njengoba esengufokisi nje, usibona ngisho sifulathele"*  
(Msimang, 1996:3-4).

(Mbhekeni grew up with criminals. He started when he was a policeman hunting criminals, being up and down between him and them. Being a detective now, he can even see the criminal from his back).

This does not impress the researcher and it also does not justify Msimang's portrayal of Mbhekeni Dlamini's detection process.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Given all the above issues which have been discussed since the beginning of this study, one believes that Msimang has created a noteworthy detective narrative if one considers the scarcity or non-existence of detective stories, not only in isiZulu, but also in the isiNguni languages as a whole. There are more strong points in Msimang's detective novel than weak points. For example, the title suits the story, the plot structure is sound, the setting suits the story, most of the characters are relevant and believable, the phases of the plot are clearly demarcated, themes touched on in the narrative emerge very clearly and reach the reader without any major effort. Msimang further deserves to be saluted for the way he handles the conclusion of this detective novel in that his criminals, Nsimbi Zwane, Jakes Dlamini and MaMchunu Mavundla are not executed but only arrested. Most readers and critics regard execution as a form of atonement by which the criminals or murderers are forgiven by the society or the victims' sympathisers. To such people, for a murderer to be merely arrested is simply not good enough as the arrest does not suggest that the criminal will be prepared to repent of the crime, nor that society will forgive him/her. However, the researcher personally congratulates Msimang for this conclusion because the profession of prosecution entails technical and legal skills and procedures which many detective writers are unable to grapple with.

Once more, given the lack of detective novels in isiZulu, one is compelled to regard Msimang's *Walivuma Icala* as an valuable contribution to this genre. It is relevant to our modern times and it deserves to be welcomed.

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## **Appendix 1**

### **Story outline in the form of a detailed summary**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

The aim of this appendix is to summarise Msimang's novel *Walivuma Icala* (He pleaded guilty). In undertaking this exercise, the first emphasis will be on describing the novel in terms of its introduction, the story line and the conclusion. Thus, this appendix will enable a reader of this study to follow arguments without reading the actual novel. It is a very long novel (218 pages) which is divided into twenty chapters and appeared in print for the first time in 1996.

#### **1.2 Story line**

The story sets off in Johannesburg, in the Supreme Court in Pritchard Street. The court is busy hearing the case of Mandlenkosi Mtshali, who lives in number 99885 Mofolo South in Soweto. Mandlenkosi is charged with killing Zinhle Mavundla, of number 909 Diepkloof Extension in Soweto, on the 27th of April 1988. Mandlenkosi pleads guilty to the charge and does not accept the bail offered to him; in other words, he prefers to remain in custody. The judge postpones the case to the 2nd of August. What is further surprising about Mandlenkosi is that he does not want to be represented by a lawyer, neither his own nor the lawyer offered by the state.

Amongst the people who have come to attend the case in court are Thandeka Mtshali, the sister of Mandlenkosi and their mother MaSibiya, Nontobeko Mavundla the sister of deceased Zinhle Mavundla, and their mother MaMchumu who is accompanied by Nsimbi Zwane, the son of a well known medical doctor in Soweto who is the neighbour of the Mavundla family. The last person mentioned is a private detective, Mbhekeni Dlamini, who is not known to either the Mavundla or the Mtshali families.

After the court has been dismissed, MaSibiya, Thandeka and Nontobeko are still remaining in the courtroom, discussing the case and expressing their doubts about Mandlenkosi being the real culprit in this case. While they are busy talking, Mbhekeni Dlamini greets them, introduces himself and hands his business card to Thandeka. During this moment, MaMchumu forcefully opens the door; she is with Nsimbi and looks very angry. She shouts at Nontobeko, slapping her in the face and says:

*"'Awunamahloni wena Nontobeko. Obani bakwabani laba osushomene nabo? Yimihlola kaMacingwane yini? Ucabanga ukuthi babulala udadewenu nje wena bazokuyekelani? Kulele kunye lapha kuwe. Ukuba kubili ngabe kuyavusana ... Emotweni wena! Njengamanje!... Emotweni wena! Uma ungayizwanga kahle inhlanekela yokuqala ngizokuphinda' "*  
(Msimang, 1996:5).

("You are not ashamed Nontobeko. Who are these people that you have befriended? I am surprised. You think that they killed your sister and what about you? You are a fool ... Get inside the car! Now!... Get inside! If you did not feel pain the first time, I'll slap you again").



Thus, Nontobeko is forcefully taken away by MaMchunu and Nsimbi. After this embarrassing incident, Mbhekeni leaves, while Thandeka and her mother MaSibiya go to the Sauer Street taxi rank to catch a taxi back to Soweto.

After Thandeka and MaSibiya have finished praying at home, the phone rings. Although they feel very scared to answer the phone, Thandeka eventually answers it. It is Nontobeko. She tells Thandeka about her depressing journey with Nsimbi and her mother. During their discussion, they decide to find a male person to persuade Mandlenkosi on their behalf to accept assistance by a lawyer in this case, because he stands a good chance of receiving a heavy sentence. This is Nontobeko's view and Thandeka supports it whole heartedly. Thandeka regards Mbhekeni as the only person who may assist them in this regard but she is scared to ask him. Nontobeko sees no need to be scared of Mbhekeni because Mbhekeni seems to be a kind man. Nontobeko and Thandeka eventually agree that they will approach Mbhekeni, and end their conversation.

Thandeka is alone in her bedroom and she is thinking about Mbhekeni. She asks herself whether Mbhekeni is a married man or not, and what his age is. She smiles. In fact she feels overcome by love for Mbhekeni. Thandeka is deep in thought, in such a way that she does not even see her mother, MaSibiya who is standing by the door. Seeing Thandeka's actions, MaSibiya asks her:

*" '... Awusho-ke Thandi empeleni benimqabuka ngempela uDlamini noma beni phica mina ngoba sengiyisaguga senu?' " (Msimang, 1996:13).*

("Tell me, Thandi were you were really seeing Dlamini for the first time or were you tricking me because you regard me as an old woman?").

Thandeka confirms that it was the first time and that she thinks that they will need Mbhekeni's assistance shortly. MaSibiya returns to the kitchen leaving Thandeka with her thoughts.

MaMchunu, the mother of the deceased, is then seen in the car with Nsimbi Zwane who is driving to Mavundla's butchery in Dube in Soweto. They are also pleased because Mandlenkosi will be sentenced to death for murdering Zinhle. Nsimbi even says that if it might happen that by any chance Mandlenkosi is not sentenced, he will personally kill Mandlenkosi. MaMchunu does not agree with this:

*" 'Cha, cha, cha! Mkhwenyana! Usuyaphaphalaza ngempela-ke lapho. Uyabona-ke uMandla yinja nje kwaphela. Uyangizwa ukuthi ngithini? UMandlenkosi uyinga futhi uyofa eyinja. Uyofa elengiswe ngentambo njengomgodoyi. Pho manje ufunelani ukungcolisa izandla zakho ngegazi lomgodoyi? Musa, Nsimbi! Musa!' " (Msimang, 1996:14).*

("No, No, No! My son! You are mistaken now. You see, Mandla is a dog, that is it. Do you hear what I am saying? Mandlenkosi is a dog and he will die hanged by the rope like a dog. So, why do you want to make your hands dirty with a dog's blood? Don't, Nsimbi! Don't").

Nsimbi insists that he will kill Mandlenkosi because he cannot afford not to revenge the assassination of Zinhle. Re-inforcing his idea, Nsimbi quotes from the Bible thus:

*" '... neBhayibeli liyasho ukuthi igazi lika-Abela lakhala lisemhlabeni. Lakhala isililo saze sayo-finyelele ezulwini, lithi maliphindiselwe. Kuthiwa uNkulunkulu wehla ezulwini ezobuza kuKhayini ethi: 'Uphi umfowenu?' " (Msimang, 1996:15).*

("... even the Bible says that Abel's blood cried on earth. It cried until it was heard in heaven that somebody should avenge its being. It is said that, God descended from heaven to ask Cain about his brother's, whereabouts. He said: 'Where is your brother?").

Nsimbi's words change MaMchunu. She ends up supporting Nsimbi's views. Nsimbi is very impressed. He tells MaMchunu that he knows "comrades" who will put a car tyre around Mandlenkosi's neck, wet the tyre with petrol, give a box of matches to him and thereafter force him to light himself. MaMchunu is also pleased to hear this. MaMchunu and Nsimbi are also worried by Mbhekeni, whom they regard as someone who will be an obstacle to their plans, but they will "remove" him. Nsimbi also tells MaMchunu that the way he loved Zinhle, forced him to make up his mind after Zinhle's death that he would never fall in love again in his life. MaMchunu rejects this idea:

*" 'Engiqonde ukukusho-ke mntanami wukuthi uma ungasoze wathanda enye intombazana ezalwa womunye umfazi ngiyokujabulela kakhulu lokho. Kodwa uma uzoqoma ukuba ube yimpohlo uNontobeko ekhona, anginakukumela nakancane lokho. Lisekhona ithuba lokuba uphinde ube*

*ngumkhwenyana wami ndodana' "* (Msimang, 1996:17).

("What I'm trying to say my child is that, if you will never love another girl that is borne by another woman, I'll be very happy about that. But if you decide to be a bachelor while Nontobeko is available, I cannot stand that. There is still a chance for you to be my son-in-law again, son").

In other words, MaMchunu believes that Nsimbi was born to be her son-in-law because when Nsimbi was born, she (MaMchunu), was the only person who was helping Doctor Zwane, the father of Nsimbi, to buy all the requirements for the baby while MaNkabinde was still in hospital with the newborn baby boy. It was during that time that she decided that Nsimbi would be her son-in-law when he grows up one day. It is for this reason that she cannot afford to lose Nsimbi.

When MaMchunu arrives at the butchery, a number of arguments between her and her husband Mavundla start. Mavundla does not like to discuss his family affairs at work. It is for this reason that MaMchunu and Nsimbi return home quickly. Nsimbi parks the car and leaves. MaMchunu goes into the house, sits on the sofa, calls Nontobeko and asks Nontobeko to forgive her for what happened in the court earlier:

*" 'Ndodakazi, okukuqala nje ngithi angixolise kuwe ngephutha engilenze ekuseni. Yiphutha ngempela phela ukuba ngikubeke isandla usuyintombi engaka; usufunda enyonivesi. Nokho uyasazi isimo ebengikuso, Nontobeko. Izwi likaMandla evuma ukuthi wabulala umntanami belisankontoza ezindlebeni zami. Inhliziyo yami ibigaya izobozi. Nakho-ke sengi zithela phezu kwakho uxoxisana nomndeni walowo mbulali. Kuvele kwamnyama*

*amehlo, ndodakazi, ngethuka sengikubeke isandla nginga qondile. Ungixolele Mavundla omuhle' "* (Msimang, 1996:22-72).

("Daughter, I first want to apologise to you about the mistake I made in the morning. It is really wrong to hit you at your age and you are now a university student. But, you know the situation I was in, Nontobeko. Mandla's voice, agreeing that he killed my child, was still echoing in my ears. I was very angry. After I found you talking with that killer's family. I was confused and I found myself having hit you. It wasn't my intention. Please forgive me, Mavundla").

Although MaMchunu asks Nontobeko to forgive her, she insists that she does not like her friendship with Thandeka because the Mtshalis are very poor and they are commoners. Nontobeko rejects her mother's views. MaMchunu insists that Nontobeko should also love Nsimbi because he is from a rich and civilised family. This annoys Nontobeko and she ends up quarrelling with her mother. At this point Mavundla arrives. Nontobeko tells her father, Mavundla, the reason why she and her mother are fighting. Now Mavundla knows the reason for the death of his daughter but he decides to keep quiet for a while.

On the other side Mbhekeni the detective thinks deeply about the case of Mandlenkosi Mtshali. He suspects that Mandlenkosi is just being arrested for no reason. The whole of Mandlenkosi's affair raises a lot of unanswered questions. Mbhekeni wishes to be with Thandeka. He gets in his car and goes to the Mtshalis. In fact Mbhekeni wants to talk to them about Mandlenkosi's case. As Mbhekeni drives alone down the street the one thing which worries him is that

he does not have the phone number and the address of Mtshali's house in Mofolo. Mbhekeni meets Nontobeko who is also on her way to Mtshali's. In their discussions it appears that Nontobeko is a first year radiography student at Wits University and Thandeka is also a first year student at the Soweto College of Education.

After Nontobeko has told the history of the love affair between Mandlenkosi and Zinhle to Mbhekeni, Mbhekeni realises that Mandlenkosi will definitely need the assistance of a lawyer. Mbhekeni phones Vusi Gasa, a lawyer who is his friend and tells him about this issue. Amongst many issues Nontobeko, Thandeka and Mbhekeni discuss at Mtshali's place the main issue which dominates their discussions is that of Mandlenkosi, Thandeka's brother. They all eventually agree that they will visit Mandlenkosi in prison tomorrow. Mbhekeni leaves. On his way back, Mbhekeni notices that he is falling for Thandeka and he also remembers the promise he made to his mother, MaShange that he would find her a daughter-in-law soon. Only one thing worries Mbhekeni about Thandeka at the moment, that if he proposes to Thandeka and she agrees, it will appear as if she accepts his proposal because she needs help!

During the following day, Thandeka, Nontobeko, Mbhekeni and Vusi Gasa the lawyer, all visit Mandlenkosi in Number Four prison. Mandlenkosi does not accept their offer to assist him with his case. He tells them that the truth is that he did not kill Zinhle but he pleaded guilty because he wants to be sentenced to

death so that he can meet his lovely darling, Zinhle. While they try to make Mbhekeni realise that what he is doing is wrong, the warder chases them away, blaming them for trying to force their views on somebody who himself accepted that he was guilty of murder. Gasa also realises that there is something wrong with Mandlenkosi's whole case; consequently he prefers to take this case up to the end. Mbhekeni takes the girls, Thandeka and Nontobeko back to their homes.

Mbatha, a policeman who held a higher rank than Mbhekeni when Mbhekeni was still a policeman, warns Mbhekeni to stay away from Mandlenkosi's case:

*" '... Ngithi qhela endleleni. Uma ungagudluki uzoshayiseka' "* (Msimang, 1996:48).

("... I say, move aside. If you don't, you'll be knocked over").

Mbhekeni regards Mbatha's warning as some sort of a threat to him; as a result they end up quarrelling. Later on Mbhekeni tells Thandeka about Mbatha's interpretation of his involvement in Mandlenkosi's case. Thandeka is surprised. It also appears later on that Sis' Neli who is a secretary in Mbhekeni's office also does not wish Mbhekeni to continue with the case because of Mbatha's threats but Mbhekeni persists. What also happens is that shortly after Mbatha's threats, Mbhekeni found himself being followed by a white Jetta car with the registration number JRB 135T.

It is at this stage, three months after Zinhle was killed, that Mbhekeni starts investigating the murder of Zinhle. Mbhekeni begins by trying to find out what type of person exactly Zinhle was and he finds the following:

- Zinhle was a beautiful person because her mother is also beautiful.
- Zinhle was a down to earth person. She was not holding herself in high regard because she managed to love Mandlenkosi who is regarded by her mother, MaMchunu as a poor commoner, although Zinhle herself was a medical student at the University of Natal.

Secondly, Mbhekeni investigates the time and the place where Zinhle was assassinated and he finds the following:

- This incident took place in the afternoon when there were a lot of people going up and down in the streets; as a result somebody should have seen what exactly happened.
- Next to the murder scene, is an old age home. Some of the old people should also have seen when this incident took place.
- Across the river there are some homes of Dube residents. The people who are staying in these houses might also have seen what took place.

Mbhekeni starts his investigation by going into the houses of Dube and begins asking questions about the assassination of Zinhle. Mbhekeni does not get any help from these residents because it is during the day and many people who might have seen the incident taking place are at work.



Mbhekeni returns to Soweto in the afternoon. To Mbhekeni's surprise, he notices that he is being followed by a red Jetta car which has a different number plate from the white Jetta which followed him earlier on. The registration number is MDH 212T. This car follows him to Mofolo Park where it takes another direction. In Dube Mbhekeni starts by going into Moloi's house. The people in this house did not see the incident but they only read about it in the Soweto Star Newspaper of April.

Secondly, he enters Mvubu's house. In this house too he receives no help except that the people remember an ambulance being followed by the police van.

The third house Mbhekeni goes into is that of a certain Ngubo family. In this house he is given no help either except that Ngubo becomes very violent when Mbhekeni asks about this incident. Ngubo asks Mbhekeni where was he all this time and when are they (Ngubo and his neighbours) going to be relieved from being troubled by the ghosts of people who die crying? The only useful news Mbhekeni gains from this family is that Ngubo's wife tells him that Mofokeng's house where he went in the morning, might be of some help to him because the wife, MaMbanjwa knows all that takes place around this area. After this Mbhekeni leaves.

The following day, Mbhekeni arrives at Mofokeng's place. Mofokeng does not want his wife, MaMbanjwa to answer anything asked by Mbhekeni because he

believes that by answering Mbhekeni a person may end up in prison, so his wife might end up in prison too:

*" 'Niyakhathaza ngokungakhuzeki, nkosikazi. Mina angimthandi umuntu owakhahlelwa yihashi esifubeni. Ngakudonsa ngendlebe ngathi uma uzoqeketha izindaba ezisingethwe ngamaphoyisa uzozithola ususejele,' "* (Msimang, 1996:63).

("My wife, you are troublesome by not taking orders. I do not like a liar. I told you that if you talk about issues that are in the hands of the police, you will find yourself in jail").

Mbhekeni threatens to arrest Mofokeng for disturbing the law because he does not want his wife, MaMbanjwa to talk. This threat annoys MaMbanjwa and Mofokeng but MaMbanjwa says that the girl, Zinhle was killed because she was seeing men. What she (MaMbanjwa) saw was that Zinhle was sitting with a man in the park. The second man appeared and she heard Zinhle crying loudly. The next thing she saw was one of the two men running away from the scene and she was not interested in what was going on there. Mbhekeni tries to ask more questions but MaMbanjwa does not want to co-operate at all now and Mbhekeni leaves.

It is now dark and Mbhekeni is on his way home, but somebody is pushing a drum in the road, obstructing Mbhekeni. He tries to avoid this person but he eventually bumps the person, his car overturns and rolls. At the same time Mbhekeni is being shot at.

MaShange, Mbhekeni's mother, does not tell anyone about the disappearance of Mbhekeni because of fear, but the two girls staying with her, Vukudle and Vukile and Mbhekeni's sister Lindiwe. Sis' Neli, Thandeka and Nontobeko only read about the overturning of Mbhekeni's car in the Soweto Star of the following morning. Sis' Neli goes to the accident scene and she finds the wreck of Mbhekeni's 4 x 4 bakkie. She reports the accident to the Jabulani police station, Brixton Murder and Robbery Squad, the insurance company and to MaShange, Mbhekeni's mother. Mbhekeni is critically injured and in hospital. Sis' Neli, Thandeka, Nontobeko and MaShange all meet in the ward in which Mbhekeni is sleeping. Thandeka cries more than the others. After this visit they all go to Mbhekeni's house in Spruitview. They drink tea, talk and pray.

MaMchunu, Nontobeko's mother, finds out early in the morning that Nontobeko is not at home and Nsimbi also is not there. She is sure that Nontobeko and Nsimbi are somewhere together. If she thinks about this, she becomes very happy because matters are starting to work as she wants:

*"Konje kungenzeka nje ukuthi kanti njengoba  
noNontobeko engekho nje bahambe bobabili?  
Ungathi sekuyalunga-ke manje"* (Msimang, 1996:80).

(By the way, it is possible that, as Nontobeko is not here, they went together? It looks like it is coming right now).

MaNkabinde Nsimbi's mother is aware of the developing relationship between her son and MaMchunu. She does not like this relationship and she is very

regretful that MaMchunu is putting her hopes on Nsimbi being her son-in-law one day. The problem is that Nsimbi has already impregnated three girls and he is not a bright person. He failed his science subjects in matric and his parents' dreams that their son would be a medical doctor one day were shattered. Nsimbi failed even to pass his B.A. degree at Wits University and eventually went to Vista University. While MaMchunu expects to see Nsimbi and Nontobeko arrive together, she is disappointed to see Nsimbi arriving alone. Eventually, MaMchunu and Nsimbi talk about this and that, but what dominates their discussion is that they are happy because Mbhekeni was involved in an accident.

Sis' Neli is now delivering the girls, Thandeka and Nontobeko to their homes. On their way they go via Mbhekeni's accident scene, the ambulance people and also visit the hospital again. They are given the tape recorder by the ambulance people, but not the gun. Mbhekeni is still in a coma. From the hospital they go to the Hillbrow police station where Mbatha, the policeman who threatened Mbekeni, works. Mbatha is the main suspect in Mbhekeni's case. Sis' Neli tells Mbatha that he is being suspected because not long ago he threatened Mbhekeni. From Mbatha they all travel to Sis' Neli's home in Orlando and they listen to the recorded tape there. They hear from the tape that Mbhekeni was involved in the accident after being followed by a red Jetta for a long time.

After listening to the tape, Sis' Neli delivers Nontobeko to her home in Diepkloof Extension and Thandeka to her home in Mofolo. Sis' Neli meets Thandeka's

mother and she feels the kindness of this family. She wishes that Mbhekeni will marry Thandeka one day when he is discharged from hospital. Most of the night Thandeka is thinking only about Mbhekeni.

At night Thandeka dreams about Mbhekeni drowning in a river and that she is trying to help him out. She cries and her mother wakes her up. She phones Nontobeko in the morning and asks Nontobeko to accompany her to visit Mbhekeni in the hospital. In the hospital Thandeka who is accompanied by Nontobeko and her mother, MaSibiya, meet Sis' Neli and Mbhekeni's mother MaShange who are also visiting Mbhekeni. Mbhekeni is now no longer in a coma but still breathes through tubes. They all pray next to Mbhekeni's bed. Mbhekeni and Thandeka hold hands and they both smile.

After a few days Mbhekeni is now much better. He tells Thandeka that he will attend Mandlenkosi's trial. On the other side it is now clear to Sis' Neli that Mandlenkosi is in fact not guilty and that she is also being followed by the red Jetta everytime she drives. Thandeka visits her brother, Mandlenkosi in Number Four prison. She asks Mandlenkosi to tell her what exactly happened about Zinhle because they all know that he did not kill her and he is not the one who stabbed Zinhle. Mandlenkosi says that to stab and to pull the knife out of the wound is now the same to him because Zinhle would not have been dead by now, if he had not pulled the knife out of the wound. What worries Mandlenkosi more is that he called Zinhle's name but she died after that. The only thing

Mandlenkosi wants now, is to be sentenced to death so that his promise to Zinhle will be fulfilled. All this annoys Thandeka. They quarrel and Thandeka leaves.

Mbhekeni is about to leave the hospital now. Vusi Gasa and the Mtshali family are worried because Mandlenkosi's trial is around the corner but Mbhekeni is not out of the hospital yet. MaMchunu and Nsimbi are very pleased because they believe that Mandlenkosi will be sentenced to death and that Mbhekeni has gone mad in the hospital. They also agree that:

*" '... Uma kuke kwenzeka iphutha, bamkhiphe, uMandla, wena ubombulala. Mina ngokhipha imali yebheyili ngiphinde futhi ngikhiphe imali yommeli oyokumela ecaleni ...' "* (Msimang, 1996:120).

("If a mistake that they release Mandla happens, you must kill him. I will pay bail money for the defence attorney who will defend you ...").

When the trial day arrives, Sis' Neli drives Thandeka and MaSibiya to court. Mbhekeni will not be able to attend this trial because he has been operated on, but Gasa will attend. The whole of the Mavundla family is present. Nontobeko is sitting with the Mtshali family. Mandlenkosi pleads guilty again. The state witnesses are Dr Livingstone who did the post-mortem, Sergeant Songo and Constable Memela. It is heard during the trial that when Zinhle cried she said, "*Lekelelani Mandla!*" (Msimang, 1996:127) which means "Help Mandla!" before she died. This surprises the court. Nobody understands why the deceased asks for help from the killer and why the killer, Mandlenkosi who self-confessed that he killed Zinhle, did not run away. Gasa does not call his witnesses to testify.

Mandlenkosi is found guilty because he was found in possession of the weapon which killed Zinhle and he was standing above the corpse. Mandlenkosi is glad to hear that he is found guilty because his promise to Zinhle is about to be fulfilled. To Mandlenkosi's surprise the judge sentences him to twenty years in prison.

Thandeka, Nontobeko, Sis' Neli and MaSibiya are all disturbed because Mandlenkosi has been sentenced. MaSibiya is heartbroken. On the other hand MaMchunu is very happy. She walks to the car with Nontobeko. In their car there are Mavundla and their driver Nsimbi Zwane. At Mavundla's home Nsimbi and MaMchunu plan to kill Mandlenkosi in prison but this will not happen because Nsimbi is scared of Mbhekeni. MaMchunu tells Nsimbi not to be scared of Mbhekeni because he is mad in hospital, it is for this reason that he did not attend the trial of Mandlenkosi. They eventually agree that Nsimbi will fetch the money later for paying the people who will carry out the "job".

Gasa goes to Mbhekeni in hospital to report. Mbhekeni is also glad because Mandlenkosi was not sentenced to death. After hearing this news Mbhekeni recovers. Even the clot of blood which was worrying him has been removed by the doctors during the operation. All that is important to Mbhekeni now is to get out of hospital as soon as possible so that he and Gasa may study Mandlenkosi's case thoroughly. He wants to check for possible mistakes which could have

been made by the judge or look for new evidence which will justify the need to appeal against Mandlenkosi's sentence.

Mandlenkosi is being taken to Bavianspoort prison. He starts to realise that he made a mistake by pleading guilty to something he never did. He remembers each and every word Thandeka said to him. He is now very worried even about his sentence as he realises that twenty years in prison will be a very long time; but it is too late now!

Sis' Neli receives a phone call from Gasa telling her that Mbhekeni will be discharged tomorrow from the hospital. This is great news to her and she phones Thandeka and Nontobeko asking them to come to the office tomorrow. The following day, the girls arrive in the office but Sis' Neli says nothing important to them, which surprises them. While Sis' Neli is still busy talking to the girls the phone rings. The hospital sister asks Sis' Neli to fetch Mbhekeni. Sis' Neli and the girls take him home. They all pray, thanking God for the recovery of Mbhekeni. After they have finished eating, Mbhekeni asks Sis' Neli and the girls to go to his office with him so that they will have enough time for discussing Mandlenkosi's case. MaShange, Mbhekeni's mother, rejects this idea. She says that Mbhekeni needs to relax especially because it is a Saturday today, and moreover, she wishes that Mbhekeni will leave this case altogether because he nearly died because of it. Mbhekeni tries to explain to his mother that:

*" '... Ayafuneka amadelakufa, mama. Bayafuneka  
onondelamzimba-bawunike-abezizwe. Kabafunwa*



*yimi ngedwa, noNkulunkulu uyabafuna. Ukuba kwakungenjalo ngabe akayidelanga indodana yakhe iyodwa ukuba izokulwa nobubi, nokufa, noSathane. Enjalo nje uNkulunkulu uyawavikela amasotsha akhe. Wabavikela oDanyeli emphandwini wezingonyama. Wabavikela o-Abednigo, noMishaki kanye noShedreka esithandweni somlilo. ... ' " (Msimang, 1996: 144-145).*

("... We need people who are prepared to die, mother. We need people who can sacrifice themselves. It is not only me who needs them, even God needs them. It was not like that. He would not have sacrificed his only son to come on earth to fight evil, death and the Devil. God protects his soldiers. He protected Daniel in the Lion's Den. He protected Abednego, Meshack and Shadrack from the burning fire ...").

After Mbhekeni's explanation, MaShange understands his point of view. Mbhekeni, Sis' Neli, Thandeka and Nontobeko now leave for the office where they will discuss Mandlenkosi's case. After long discussions they end up by agreeing that Nontobeko will visit Mandlenkosi and talk to him about the possibility of appealing the sentence and of Mbhekeni finding out who exactly injured him. Sis' Neli is not prepared to take any part here because she knows that the thugs are in possession of Mbhekeni's gun which they may use to shoot him. Sis' Neli is also scared because sergeant Mbatha did not visit Mbhekeni in hospital after he threatened Mbhekeni and Mbhekeni was injured immediately thereafter. Thandeka says she does not think talking to Mandlenkosi will work because she tried to talk to him but he did not listen.

Mbhekeni finds out that the policeman who took fingerprints where he was attacked, is Mathanda Zondi. Mbhekeni also remembers that he was attacked by Jakobe Dlamini, the son of his father's younger brother who stays in Tladi, Soweto. Even Zondi the policeman knows this Jakobe who is known as Jakes the leader of Tladi Spoilers, which is a notorious gang of thugs in Soweto. The fingerprint results confirm that Jakes is the attacker of Mbhekeni. The policemen surround Jakes's house at night, he is arrested and Mbhekeni's gun is found in his (Jakes's) possession. Jakes is now very sorry when he realises that he nearly killed his brother.

Two weeks have passed now since Mandlenkosi was imprisoned in Bavianspoort prison. None of his relatives has visited him so far. He is now sorry that he did not listen to people who were prepared to help him.

Nontobeko prepares herself to visit Mandlenkosi in Bavianspoort prison but she does not know how to reach it. She asks Thandeka to accompany her but Thandeka refuses. Nontobeko phones Sibongile Msimang, her classmate at Wits. Sibongile tells Nontobeko to take a taxi from Soweto to Noord Street in Johannesburg and from there she must take a taxi which will drop her in Bloed Street in Pretoria, where they will meet.

Mandlenkosi's name is called over the loudspeaker in prison, to come and meet his visitor. He is shocked to see that Zinhle is alive. In fact Mandlenkosi is

confused by the fact that Nontobeko is wearing Zinhle's dress which was bought for her by Mandlenkosi himself. Nontobeko is surprised by Mandlenkosi's thinness. They talk about Zinhle's death, his arrest, his family, the way Mbhekeni was attacked, the prison life and many other issues. What becomes important in Nontobeko's and Mandlenkosi's discussion is that Mandlenkosi now realises that he made a massive mistake by rejecting the assistance which was offered to him. He now promises that if it is needed, he will co-operate fully with Mbhekeni. Nontobeko leaves after a long discussion.

Mbhekeni is very pleased with the way things have gone since he was discharged from hospital. He goes to Moroka police station to try to get from Jakes the name of the person who sent Jakes to kill him. Jakes does not know such a person because the deal was made with one of their group members, known as Joe Mathambo, who lives in Mshenguville. Jakes requests sergeant Songo to be released on bail so that he can meet with Joe Mathambo and his group because they owe him money, and he is also annoyed by the fact that he nearly killed his brother. He says Mbhekeni and himself have one grandfather, Thelesakeni. Mbhekeni agrees with Sergeant Songo that Jakes be granted bail.

Nontobeko tells Mbhekeni about her journey to Bavianspoort prison. Mbhekeni is glad to hear that Mandlenkosi has agreed to co-operate. He now writes a letter of appeal against Mandlenkosi's sentence. He takes the letter to Mbatha, the policeman who is handling Mandlenkosi's case. He tells Mbatha that he is

appealing. Mbatha apologises for all the misunderstandings between them and Mbhekeni accepts the apology. Mbatha tells Mbhekeni that they, as policemen, support Mbhekeni's appeal idea and that the police commissioner has announced that there is a reward of one hundred thousand rand which will be given to anyone who will give evidence leading to the arrest and sentencing of the killer of Mavundla's child. This news pleases Mbhekeni and he leaves.

Mbhekeni's appeal application is granted in less than a week. Mandlenkosi is granted three thousand rand bail and Mbhekeni pays it. Mandlenkosi is fetched from prison by Mbhekeni, Thandeka and Nontobeko.

The story of the hundred thousand rand reward is published in many newspapers. MaMbanjwa sees this story in the newspaper and she regards it as the only opportunity she has for buying herself a smart house in Spruitview and the best furniture. She phones Sergeant Mbatha at Hillbrow Police Station, who tells her to contact Mbhekeni. MaMbanjwa goes to Mbhekeni's office early the next day and forces Mbhekeni to provide proof that all she will say will be rewarded as it is stated in the newspaper. Mbhekeni writes on a piece of paper, signs, stamps and gives it to MaMbanjwa as the proof she asked for. After MaMbanjwa has said what she wants to say as her evidence, she agrees to Mbhekeni that she will go to court to testify. MaMbanjwa leaves but she is worried by the scores of people who come to Mbhekeni's office; maybe they are coming to give their

evidence as well. MaMbanjwa is not prepared to share the reward with anyone else.

Mandlenkosi tells Mbhekeni and Sis' Neli about the whole difficulty he had come across because of falling in love with Zinhle the child of a tycoon, while he is a commoner. He explains that at one stage he chose to terminate their love affair but that worried Zinhle too much. Forced by that situation, Mandlenkosi says he registered at Damelin so that he could further his studies and after that he registered for a B. Comm at UNISA. Unfortunately, Mandlenkosi did not finish his studies at UNISA because of the sudden death of his father. MaMchunu hated him but in spite of this, he and Zinhle were very much in love and they believed that they were born for each other. He was shocked one day when he found Zinhle stabbed in Mofolo Park. He says he pulled out the knife from Zinhle's body because he wanted to stab himself so that he could follow Zinhle. During that moment he heard the police shouting to him saying "Hands up!". That is how he was arrested. After his arrest, he pleaded guilty with the hope that he would be sentenced to death so that he could meet Zinhle again. Mandlenkosi continues saying he did not see the killer properly because he was rushing to assist Zinhle, but what he still remembers is that the killer was wearing a khakhi shirt and trousers. MaMbanjwa mentioned this too in her testimony.

Mandlenkosi is facing difficulties. His mother is very sick and if she dies he will be expected to bury her, but Thandeka needs money for school fees and there is

no money at all at home. Mandlenkosi is looking for a job high and low, but nobody hires him because he is a 'killer'. Mbhekeni is also worried about Mandlenkosi because he might be attacked by his enemies while busy looking for work.

On Sunday, Mbhekeni, Mandlenkosi and Thandeka are coming from church and they decide to fetch Nontobeko from home so that they can go to the cinema together. They find MaMchunu and Nsimbi talking. MaMchunu cannot do anything to stop Nontobeko from joining her friends. When they leave, they sit in pairs in the car. Nontobeko is sitting at the back seat with Mandlenkosi and Thandeka is sitting in front with Mbhekeni. This upsets MaMchunu too much to such an extent that she swears at Nsimbi:

*" 'We Nsimbi! Wayekela ingane yami ithathwa yizinswelaboya ziyoyenza isilo sengubo! Kanti uyisiphukuphuku sendoda nawe? Ngcono thina esazala amantombazane odwa. Konje kuqhoshe nje okunguNomusa kuthi kwazala indoda, kusho isidwedwe lesi,' "* (Msimang, 1996:190).

("Nsimbi! Why do you let my child go with criminals that are going to kill her? Are you also a foolish man? We are better because we only bore girls. By the way, Nomusa is proud thinking that she bore a man, she does not know that she bore a worthless person").

It is only at this point that Nsimbi notices that Mandlenkosi is also in Mbhekeni's car. MaMchunu asks Nsimbi why he does not tell her that he has failed to find people who will kill Mandlenkosi? Nsimbi replies by telling MaMchunu that he has found them, but they need R10 000.00 first. MaMchunu quickly gives this

sum of money to Nsimbi. Nsimbi becomes so happy that he ends up speaking *tsotsi* language. MaMchunu seems to be surprised to find out that Nsimbi is a *tsotsi*. Nsimbi promises MaMchunu that Mandlenkosi will definitely be dead tomorrow and he leaves immediately after that.

Mandlenkosi is sleeping and he is very worried. He promised Nontobeko that he would see her at Mavundla's butchery tomorrow. Mandlenkosi's aim in going to Mavundla's butchery is that he wants to explain to Mavundla what exactly happened on the day of Zinhle's death. Mandlenkosi falls asleep while thinking about all this. Mandlenkosi is awakened by Thandeka in the morning of the following day and she tells him how beautiful, kind and helpful Nontobeko is. She insists that Mandlenkosi should definitely consider marrying Nontobeko. All Thandeka says worries Mandlenkosi, who does not see himself marrying Nontobeko because it could happen that she has already seen better guys at Wits University. Eventually Mandlenkosi leaves for Mavundla's butchery.

In the butchery, Mandlenkosi explains his innocence to Mavundla. Nontobeko is very glad because of Mandlenkosi's bravery. At the end Mavundla understands and accepts Mandlenkosi's explanation. Mavundla also offers Mandlenkosi a temporary job in the butchery until he obtains a full-time job. Mandlenkosi starts to work there and Mavundla tells him that he must explain his innocence also to MaMchunu.

Simphiwe is Mandlenkosi's friend. He phones Mtshali's house to tell Mandlenkosi that he got him a job. Simphiwe leaves a message with Thandeka that he will see Mandlenkosi in the evening or tomorrow. Jakes phones Mbhekeni and he tells him that somebody came to bribe them to kill Mandlenkosi. Tonight Mtshali's house will definitely be attacked. Mbhekeni sees a great need to protect Mandlenkosi and he immediately phones Sergeant Mbatha for assistance. Mbatha advises Mbhekeni not to go alone to Mofolo; instead, he must go with three policemen, who are Mahlangu, Kekana and Songo, in small cars.

Mbhekeni phones Thandeka and tells her about what might happen to her brother, Mandlenkosi. This news shocks Thandeka and she phones Mavundla's butchery to warn Mandlenkosi but nobody answers the phone. Thandeka is now confused and worried. She does not know exactly what to do to get hold of her brother. She phones Nontobeko at home but unfortunately she is also not there because MaMchunu answers.

It is now dark in the evening and there is a black car circling Mtshali's house. Inside this car there are some male assassins whose faces are covered with balaclavas. They are all armed with loaded guns. These assassins know very well that Mandlenkosi is working for Mavundla at the butchery, what time he will arrive at home and what clothes he is wearing today. All this means that there is no way Mandlenkosi might survive tonight. The police have also spotted



this black car and they keep on communicating through their radios monitoring its movements. At this point a man appears. He is wearing clothes which look exactly like Mandlenkosi's. This person enters Mtshali's yard and he knocks at the door. As he does so, there is a large explosion and roaring of guns and he falls down. Thandeka and her mother are ducking and diving inside the house trying to hide. The policemen light their spotlights and start firing. The assassins are arrested and one is killed.

At this moment another car comes along the road. Songo stops it and orders its driver to raise his hands. This is Mavundla and inside his car are Nontobeko and Mandlenkosi. Mandlenkosi and Nontobeko see Mbhekeni and he also sees them. They are all joyful. They run to the shot person and they become very sad, especially Mandlenkosi when he finds out that this person is Simphiwe.

The corpses are taken to the mortuary and the arrested assassins are taken to prison by the police. Nontobeko asks her father Mavundla to allow her to remain with Thandeka with the aim of consoling her after such a tragic experience. Sergeant Mbatha leaves some of his policemen to guard Mtshali's house and the other people depart.

The following day Mbhekeni visits the arrested assassins in prison. The policemen go to Zwane's house in Diepkloof Extension and they arrest Nsimbi. Nsimbi's mother, MaNkabinde, blames MaMchunu for Nsimbi's arrest. This is

the relationship that MaNkabinde had been suspicious of since its beginning. Meanwhile Mavundla is searching for his R10 000.00 which disappeared from the safe. MaMchunu says that she thinks Nontobeko has taken the money but Mavundla is reluctant to believe this because he and MaMchunu are the only people who have access to this safe. Mavundla fetches Nontobeko from Mtshali's.

Mbhekeni receives a notification that Mandlenkosi will be tried on the 8th of October in the Bloemfontein Supreme Court of Appeal. He books in at the hotel where Mandlenkosi, Nontobeko, Thandeka and himself will sleep. He will sleep with Mandlenkosi and Nontobeko will sleep with Thandeka in another room.

Many people have come to attend this trial. The next day, after Mandlenkosi has taken the oath, his lawyer Gasa starts questioning him about what happened on the 27th of April 1988. He states that although he would not now be able to point to one of the killers, he saw a man who was wearing a khakhi shirt and trousers and he is the one who killed Zinhle. Gasa produces an OKAPI knife as the weapon which was used to kill Zinhle, which is produced as exhibit number one.

The state lawyer asks Mandlenkosi why he pleaded guilty on the 2nd of August? He explains that he pleaded guilty because by that time he thought he would be sentenced to death and that would be the only and quickest way for him to meet

with Zinhle again. Since he has not been sentenced to death he prefers to tell the truth. Gasas also insists that Mandlenkosi is telling the truth today because he is testifying under oath, unlike he did on the 2nd of August.

MaMbanjwa comes in as a second witness. In her testimony she states that she knows the killer:

*"Ngimazi kahle! ... Ngasho kahle kuDlamini ukuthi isigilamkhuba wumfana kadokotela uZwane. Wuye owafike wapaka imoto kayise la, walandela ingane yomuntu kanti uyoyihlinza. ... Ningaze ningibuze igama kanti uZwane unabafana abangaki ngoba munye - wuye uNsimbi lona. Futhi angithandabuzi ukuthi nguyeyingoba ukhuliswe yimi. Ngesikhathi udokotela esahlala lapha eDube yimina engangiwasha, ngi-ayinela yena lo mfana ... "*  
(Msimang 1996:210-211).

("I know him well! ... I told Dlamini that the criminal is Doctor Zwane's son. It is him who parked his father's car here, he followed a poor child to kill her... Can you even ask me a name, how many boys does Zwane have, because he has one. It is this Nsimbi. I don't doubt that it is him because I raised him. When the doctor used to stay here at Dube, it was me who was doing the washing and ironing for this boy ...").

The third witness is Jakes (Jakobe) Dlamini who believes that by telling the truth, his charge of attacking Mbhekeni Dlamini will be dropped. Jakobe tells the court that Nsimbi arranged with Mathambo to have the detective "removed". He was asked to do the "job" but he failed to "remove" the detective. Nsimbi refused to pay them. Nsimbi came again to ask them to "remove" Mandlenkosi. He (Jakes) just listened, took R5 000.00 and thereafter alerted his brother Mbhekeni.

The fourth witness is a policeman who took fingerprints from the accident scene, Mathanda Zondi. In his testimony Mathanda confirms that Nsimbi's finger prints were found on the knife, exhibit number one.

The fifth witness is the doctor who did the post-mortem. He confirms that the blood stains which are on the khakhi clothes are exactly the same as the blood stains which are on the knife.

Sergeant Songo is the sixth witness who confirms that the khakhi clothes, which are blood stained, were found under Nsimbi's mattress in his bedroom.

The last witness is Nsimbi Zwane himself. All the evidence which has been given by the previous witnesses forces him to tell the truth, which comes as a shock to Mavundla and the Zwane family. Nsimbi admits that he killed Zinhle but it was not his aim. He loved Zinhle but Zinhle did not accept his love proposal. On the day that Zinhle was killed he was aiming to kill Mandlenkosi. In fact he does not know how Zinhle was stabbed. Asked about the attacks on Mbhekeni and Simphiwe, Nsimbi admits that he wanted to kill both these people. He bribed the assassins to kill Mbhekeni and Mandlenkosi. MaMchunu instigated him to do all these things and she paid all the monies wanted by the killers. He also admits that MaMchunu gave him R10 000.00 in order to pay the killers who were supposed to kill Mandlenkosi.

After Nsimbi's testimony, the judge adjourns the court for a short while and leaves the courtroom. Mavundla slaps, kicks and swears at MaMchunu. He wants his daughter and his R10 000.00. There is chaos in the courtroom because of this fight between Mavundla and his wife. Later on Mavundla gets in his car and leaves for home.

After a short break the judge thanks Mbhekeni for his hard work in this case, finds Mandlenkosi not guilty and recommends that the case should be re-opened and Nsimbi Zwane should be charged with murder. The court adjourns. Mbhekeni and his group are very happy. MaMchunu remains crying in the court building because her secret has been exposed. She feels betrayed by Nsimbi and her husband also threatened to kill her. It could be for all these reasons that she is crying and scared to go home. Everybody leaves.

### **1.3 Conclusion**

The foregoing is a story outline in the form of a detailed summary of *Walivuma Icala*. This storyline outline serves as a comprehensive foundation for the whole discussion in this study. It also gives a very clear summary of the content in terms of the different roles of different characters in the story, various themes in the story and the setting of the story.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Msimang's biographical details**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The aim of this appendix is to record Msimang's biographical details from his birth date up to the completion of this study (2001). Msimang is a man of many talents and achievements, which will be discussed in detail in this appendix. The discussion will look at Msimang's place of birth, education, employment history, scholarly and creative endeavours, papers delivered at conferences, literary awards / prizes won and membership of professional and community organisations.

#### **2.2 Biography**

Msimang was born on 25 October 1944 at Ethalaneni Mission in Nkandla, KwaZulu-Natal. He started his primary education there, at Ethalaneni B. C. School and later on he moved to Macela B. C. School also in Nkandla. He started his secondary education at Mbizwe Secondary where he passed his Standard eight (the old Form III). After he had passed, Msimang moved to Johannesburg to look for greener pastures. From 1962 to 1970 Msimang was working as a domestic servant in Johannesburg. From 1962 to November 1964 he was working for Mr Reg Park, still doing domestic work, and he continued

with this line of work, working for Dr F. A. Zoellner from December 1964 to August 1970.

What is interesting is that Msimang did not just relax after he obtained these domestic positions. He immediately registered with Transafrica Correspondence College, through which he completed his junior and senior certificates studying part time. After passing matric, he started working as a clerk at Werksmans Attorneys in Johannesburg from 1970. At the same time he registered for a B.A. degree with the University of South Africa which he completed in 1974, majoring in isiZulu and history: subjects which still exert great influence in his literature books. From January 1974 to December 1976 Msimang was doing articles of clerkship with the same law company and he was awarded his LLB degree with a dissertation on **Euthanasia and the law in South Africa** in 1978, just a year after he had started working as what used to be called Assistant Professional Assistant in the Department of African Languages at the University of South Africa, the institution at which he is still working to date. From January 1978, Msimang was promoted and he started working as a Professional Assistant. As Professional Assistant Msimang was responsible for the teaching of isiZulu grammar and literature to non-Zulu students taking the isiZulu Special Course. This included setting and marking assignments and examinations; drafting tutorial letters and commentaries on assignments; and running group discussions on the subject. Msimang was promoted to a full lectureship in January 1979 and held this position until December 1984. During that period he was also busy

with his studies and he completed two degrees with distinction. The first one was an Hons. B.A. in African Languages (1980) and the second one was an M.A. also in African Languages with a dissertation entitled: **Folktale influence on the Zulu Novel** (1984). As Msimang was busy accumulating his degrees, his work responsibilities also accumulated.

As lecturer, he performed all the duties he did as a Professional Assistant for courses one to three and also translated study guide notes on literature from English/Afrikaans drafts into Zulu. At the same time he was used by the Institute for Continuing Education to teach communicative Zulu to white students of the Institute in a face to face situation.

In January 1985 he was promoted to a Senior Lecturer and his duties increased further. As Senior Lecturer he became involved also with Honours programmes specialising in folklore, drama, and phonology. He also drafted lecture notes for both under- and post- graduate papers. In 1989 Msimang added another degree to his collection: a D.Litt. et Phil. with a thesis entitled: **Some phonological aspects of Tekela Nguni dialects**.

In January 1991 Msimang became Associate Professor. As Associate professor he became a paper leader for Folklore at Course 3 and Honours level. He supervised and promoted Masters and Doctoral students in the fields of socio-



linguistics, grammar, literature, phonology and folklore. By the year 2000 four of his doctoral and ten of his Masters students had graduated.

In January 1992 Msimang became a full Professor, which he is to date. As full professor he was appointed as Head of Department and had to provide academic leadership to the biggest department of African Languages in the world. He managed a very complex department, attending to the equitable allocation of funds to the nine language sub-departments and also to the appointment and promotion of staff. With the help of the Departmental Executive he formulated Departmental Policy and ensured the smooth management of the Department. He also served on many professional structures of the University right up to Senex.

From March 1997 to date Msimang has been seconded to the Administration Section as Acting Registrar (Academic).

As acting registrar (academic) he is the Secretary of the University, a Chief Administrative Officer, and a link between the students and the University. He is directly in charge of the front-line administrative departments of the University, namely: the Examinations Department, Undergraduate Student Affairs and Post-graduate Student Affairs. His other line departments are Committee Services and the Music Department. He chairs a number of committee meetings such as the Calendar Committee, Examinations

Commission, and other ad hoc committees including selection committees. As part of Management he is also involved in the day to day running of the University and its regional facilities.

Msimang's love of education did not end after he finished his doctorate degree. In 1994 he registered for the H.E.D. which he completed in 1996.

### **Scholarly and creative endeavours**

Msimang is a scholar of undisputable repute. This is confirmed by the number of published research articles, book reviews and chapters in books as listed below:

#### **A. Research Articles, Book Reviews and Chapters in Books**

1. 1980 Factors that influence the Composition of a Praise-poem in Zulu, in Wentzel, P.J. **Third African Languages congress**, Unisa, 1980.
2. 1980 **The Image of Shaka in World Views** edited by M. Macnamara, J.L. van Schaik.
3. 1981 "Imagery in Zulu Praise-Poetry" in **LIMI**.
4. 1982 Review of **Ingoapele Madingoane's: Black trial, A Contemporary black Epic in Soweto Poetry** edited by M. Chapman, McGraw-Hill.
5. 1984 "A Preliminary Bibliographical Survey of Research on Poetry in Southern African Vernaculars" in the **S. Afr. J. Afr. Languages**, 1984(1) Supplement.
6. 1984 "A Review of L.B.Z. Buthelezi's: **Amaqabunga Entombe**", in the **S. Afr. J. Afr. Languages**, 1984(2) Supplement.

7. 1984 "A Review of M.T. Mkhize's: **Amahlaya Alala Insilla**", in the **S. Afr. J. African Languages**, 1984(2) Supplement.
8. 1985 "A Review of Kenneth Bhengu's **Uphuya WaseMshwathi**", in the **S. Afr. J. Afr. Languages**, 1985(5) Supplement.
9. 1986 "A Review of Essop Patel's: **The World of Can Themba: Selected Writings**", in the **Journal for Comparative African Studies**.
10. 1987 "Impact of Zulu on Tsotsi-taal" in the **S. Afr. J. Afr. Languages**, 1987(3).
11. 1990 "Reception of Shaka Zulu: An evaluation of its cultural and Historical Context", **Southern African Journal for folklore Studies**, Vol. 1.
12. 1990 "Syntagmatic versus Paradigmatic Structural Analysis of Zulu folktales", **S. A. Journal of African Languages**, Vol. 10, no. 4, Nov.
13. 1991 "A Review of the Praises of Dingana", **Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies**, Vol. 2.
14. 1993 "The future status and function of Zulu in the new South Africa" in **Perspectives on language planning for South Africa**. P.H. Swanepoel (ed) Via Afrika. Also in **S. Afr. J. Afr. Languages** 1992, Vol. 12(4).
15. 1994 "Language attitudes and the harmonisation of Nguni & Sotho" in **South African Tydskrif Taalk.**, Supplement 20.
16. 1994 "Out of Africa: Women's rights in a changing society". **Bulletin of the International Committee on Urgent Anthropological and Ethnological research**, No. 36.
17. 1994 "African languages and empowerment". **Language, Law and Equality**, edited by Prinsloo, K. et al. **UNISA**.
18. 1996 "Language dispensation in the new provinces of South Africa", **S. A. Tydskrif vir Taalkunde**, Supplement 22.
19. 1996 "The status of African Literature in South African literary history" in **Rethinking South African Literary history**, edited by Smit, J.A. et al. Durban: Y-Press.

20. 1996 "Scenarios for medium of instruction and communication at Unisa - The case for African languages", in **Towards a language policy for Unisa** edited by C.F. Swanepoel et al Pretoria: University of South Africa Press.
21. 1998 "The nature and history of harmonisation of African languages" in **Between extinction and distinction: The harmonisation and standardisation of African languages**, edited by K. Prah, Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
22. 1999 "The Zulu people and the development of their language and literature" an introductory chapter to: **Bibliography of the Zulu language to the year 1998**. (Compiled by Nelly Mokhonoana and Monica Strassner) Pretoria: National Library of South Africa.

## **B. Research Books**

Msimang has also researched and published a number of valuable books which are used in schools, in tertiary education institutions and by the ordinary members of the society. Such books are also listed below:

1. 1975 **Kusadliwa ngoludala**: Shuter & Shooter. (A text on Zulu customs and traditions)
2. 1986 **Izimbongi Izolo Nanamuhla** - Umqulu 1 - Bard Publishers. (Critical evaluation of Zulu poetry with an anthology).
3. 1987 **Folktale influence on the Zulu Novel**, Acacia (Via Afrika).
4. 1987 **Kwesukesukela**, Bard Publishers. (A text on Zulu traditional literature).
5. 1988 **Izimbongi Izolo Nanamuhla** - Umqulu 2 - Bard Publishers. (Critical evaluation of Zulu poetry with an anthology).
6. 1991 **Inkosi Yinkosi ngabantu**, Out of Africa Publishers. (A text on traditional literature).
7. 1992 **African Languages and Language Planning in South Africa** (The Nhlapo-Alexander Notion of Harmonisation Revisited) Pretoria: Bard Publishers.

8. 1998 **A linguistic analysis of Zulu** (in co-authorship with Prof George Poulos) Pretoria: Via Afrika.

### C. Literature Books

Msimang is one of the highly respected writers of isiZulu literature books. He has contributed much to isiZulu literature. Some of his books were prescribed for schools and tertiary institutions and even broadcast by uKhozi FM, which used to be known as Radio Zulu. Here is a list of his published literature books:

1. 1973 **Akuyiwe Emhlahlweni**; Via Afrika (A novel).
2. 1976 **Izulu Eladuma ESandlwana**; Van Schaik (A historical drama).
3. 1980 **Iziziba ZoThukela**, Via Afrika (poetry collection).
4. 1982 **Buzani KuMkabayi**, De Jager-Haum (a historical novel).
5. 1990 **Amaseko**, Centaur Publications (One-act plays in co-authorship with D.B.Z. Ntuli & M.N. Makhambeni -Ed.).
6. 1991 **UNodumehlezi KaMenzi** Bard Publishers (poetry collection).
7. 1991 **Ucu olumhlophe** MacMillan Boleswa (Annotated poetry collection - in co-authorship with L.T.L. Mabuya.)
8. 1995 **Igula Lendlebe Aligcwali**, Kagiso Publishers (Short stories/essays anthology).
9. 1996 **Walivuma Icala** (a detective novel).

### D. Translations

Msimang has also made a valuable contribution in the field of translations. He translated a number of books by well known and respected authors from English to isiZulu. A list follows:

1. 1980 **Imathimathiki Yezikhuthali - Ibanga 1**, De Jager-Haum. A translation of A. Dill and M. Bosch: "**Active Mathematics, Std.1.**"
2. 1980 **Imathimathiki Yezikhuthali - Ibanga 2**, De Jager-Haum. A translation of A. Dill & M. Bosch: "**Active Mathematics, Std. 2.**"
3. 1986 **Wena Enkantolo Yamacala Amancane Emibango**, Juta & Co. A translation of Prof. S. A. Strauss: "**You in the Small Claims Court.**"
4. 1995 **Kwafa Gula Linamasi**, Heinemann. Chinua Achebe's: **Things Fall Apart.**

#### **E. Compiled and Edited Literary Anthologies**

Msimang has likewise made a valuable contribution by compiling and editing literary anthologies. His contributions in this field are as follows:

1. 1979 **Amagagasi**, J.L. van Schaik (Zulu Poetry Anthology).
2. 1980 **Izinsungulo**, De Jager-Haum (Zulu Poetry Anthology).
3. 1984 **Intwasahlobo**, J.L. van Schaik (Zulu Poetry Anthology).
4. 1985 **Iminduze**, Sasavona (Zulu Poetry Anthology).
5. 1988 **Inkhundla**, MacMillan-Boleswa (editor with E.T. Mthembu),
6. 1988 **Ibandla lasentabeni**, Acacia (Poetry Anthology).
7. 1991 **Ithungelwa ebandla**, L.Z. Sikwane Publishing Company (Anthology of essays and short stories).
8. 1994 **Amehlo Embongi**, MacMillan-Boleswa (Anthology of Zulu poetry).
9. 1995 **Izintaba zoKhahlamba**. (Poetry anthology). Pretoria: .L. van Schaik.
10. 1997 **Ilanga lokuthula** (Poetry anthology) Pretoria: Aktua Press.

## **F. School Grammar Series**

Besides literature, translations and scholarly papers, Msimang has researched and published isiZulu school grammar books for primary and secondary levels in co-authorship with a number of people. The following is a list of the well known books he co-authored:

1. 1981 **IsiZulu Sezikhuthali (Ibanga 3)** in co-authorship with L.T.L.Mabuya. Pretoria: De Jager-Haum. (Zulu manual for Std. 3).
2. 1981 **IsiZulu Sezikhuthali (Ibanga 4)** in co-authorship with L.T.L. Mabuya. Pretoria: De Jager-Haum. (Zulu manual for Std 4).
3. 1982 **IsiZulu Sezikhuthali (Ibanga 5)** in co-authorship with L.T.L. Mabuya. Pretoria: De Jager-Haum. (Zulu manual for Std.5)
4. 1986 **IsiZulu Sezikhuthali (Ibanga 6)**. Pretoria: De Jager-Haum. (Zulu manual for Std. 6)
5. 1986 **IsiZulu Sezikhuthali (Ibanga 7)** in co-authorship with S. Shamase. Pretoria: De Jager-Haum. (Zulu manual for Std 7).
6. 1986 **IsiZulu samaciko 8** in co-authorship with J. B. Hlongwane and D. B. Z. Ntuli. Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter (Zulu manual for Std 8).
7. 1987 **IsiZulu samaciko 9** (Zulu manual for Std 9) in co-authorship with J. B. Hlongwane and D. B. Z. Ntuli) Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter.
8. 1988 **IsiZulu samaciko 10** (Zulu manual for Std 10) in co-authorship with J. B. Hlongwane and D. B. Z. Ntuli) Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter.
9. 1991 **Isizwe esisha** (A Zulu reader for Std 5) in co-authorship with Lawrence Molefe. Georgeville: Bard Publishers.
10. 1995 **Ekwazini Std 4** (A Zulu reader for Std 4) in co-authorship with F. A. Ngobese, V. O. S. Radebe and S. M. Sikakana) Georgeville: Bard Publishers.

- 11 1996 **IsiZulu sabasha Gr 1-5)** Zulu grammar series for Grades 1-5 in co-authorship with N. Mbhense, V. P. N. Mkhize and N. S. Shamase) Pretoria: Kagiso.

### **Literary Awards/Prizes won**

For his valuable contributions, Msimang received a number of literary awards and won some literary prizes, in this order:

1. 1982 De Jager-Haum Overall Literary Prize with the novel: **Buzani kuMkabayi.**
2. 1984 B. W. Vilakazi – Shuter & Shooter Literary Award with the book: **Kusadliwa ngoludala.**
3. 1986 B. W. Vilakazi – Shuter & Shooter Literary Award with the novel: **Buzani kuMkabayi.**
4. 1988 B. W. Vilakazi – Shuter & Shooter Literary Award with the poetry book: **Izimbongi izolo namamuhla 1.**
5. 1991 Shuter & Shooter Literary Prize with the article: “Reception of Shaka Zulu – An evaluation of its cultural and historical context.”
6. 1994 Kagiso Literary Prize for Zulu with the book: **Igula lendlebe aligcwali.**

### **2.3 Conclusion**

Msimang’s full biography is very long and it could form a book on its own. The researcher has used the above information only because it is relevant to the study.

In actual fact, Msimang was and still is involved in a number of professional and community organisations. For example, he has served on many University of South Africa structures since 1984 to date where he was (in some cases he still is) a member of the Sub-faculty of Languages Board, member of Arts Faculty



Board, Chairman: Department of African Languages Exco., member of Senate, chairman: Calendars committee, ex-Officio member of Council and other council Committees, ex-officio member of Senex and other Senate committees, ex-officio member of Senate, member of University Management committee, member of UBTF's commission on strategic aspects, member of the IMB (Interim Management Board), Faculty of Arts Exco, Unisa representative on Senate of CESA (College of Education of South Africa), member of Students liaison committee under Prof. van Vuuren (Rector), member of PACEE (Principal's Advisory Committee for Equity and Excellence), chairman of the Commission's sub-committee on the University's Vision and Mission, Chairman: Examinations Committee.

Besides serving on the University of South Africa structures, Msimang also participated in a number of other external bodies where he served either as chairman, board member or as ordinary member. For example, he served or is still serving as chairman on the following bodies:

1. 1986-98 Chairman and Founder of SAFOS (Southern African Folklore Society).
2. 1986-1990 Chairman: Zulu Subject Committee (Department of Education and Training).
3. 1991-1994 Chairman of Council of Ikageng – Pretoria Boys High School under the auspices of Project Literacy.
4. 1993-1996 Chairman of STANON (Standard and non-standard varieties of African languages), the HSRS project.
5. 1994 Chairman of Council of Promat College of Education.

6. 1995-1999 Chairman: Northern Region of ALASA.
7. 1996 Chairman of LANGTAG's sub-committee of Development of South African Languages.
8. 1998 Chairman of South African Heraldry Council.
9. 1999 Chairman: PANSALB's sub-committee of Development of African Literatures and Previously Marginalised Languages.
10. 1999 Chairman: Ethalaneni Development Trust, Nkandla.

Msimang served as board member on the following bodies:

1. 1978-1990 Zulu language Board.
2. 1986-1990 Combined subject committee & Examinations Board – DET.
3. 1995-1999 ALASA Board.
4. 1996 PANSALB (Pan South African Language Board).

Besides serving as a chairman or board member on all the above stated bodies, Msimang also served as ordinary member of the following bodies and is still a member of most of them:

1. 1979 ALASA (African Language Association of Southern Africa)
2. 1984-1992 INQOLOBANE-Bureau for Zulu Language and Culture.
3. 1985 Founder member of USIBA-Zulu Writers Guild.
4. 1986 Founder member of SAFOS (South African Folklore Society).
5. 1987-1994 Council Member: IKAGENG/Pretoria Boys High School, (under the auspices of Project Literacy).
6. 1987-1996 Executive Committee of STANON (Standard and non-standard African language varieties in the urban areas of South Africa).
7. 1993 Heraldry Council

8. 1996 LANGTAG (Language Plan Task Group).
9. 1999 Council of Pretoria Boys High School.

Msimang offered his services for the benefit of his people in many different ways, such as:

1. 1977-1992 External Examiner for the JMB in Std. 10 Zulu HG Paper 3 Exams.
2. 1984 External Examiner in African Languages for: RAU, UNIZUL, University of Natal, University of Pretoria, University of Durban-Westville and Vista.
3. 1986-1990 Adjudicator in the SABC Panel for Radio Astera and Artes Awards.
4. 1990-1993 Member of ACCLLS (Advisory Committee for Comparative Linguistics and Literature Studies (under the auspices of LITERATOR).
5. 1990-1994 Member of the African Studies Forum – UNISA.
6. 1991-1994 Adjudicator in the SABC Panel for TV Artes Awards.
7. 1993 Examiner for Std. 10 Zulu HG P3 Exams.
8. 1994 Adjudicator for the Nguni Panel of the M-Net Book Prize.
9. 1996-1997 Member of the Multicultural Circle – UNISA.

Msimang has travelled extensively in South Africa, Africa and Europe attending various conferences where he has delivered a number of speeches or academic papers.

By providing this abridged biography of Msimang, the researcher intends to give a clear picture of a man who worked his way up the ladder, a man of many talents and a man who can be regarded as an example, and who will provide

encouragement to many generations to come. A man who started working as a domestic servant and by taking his opportunities became a professor. He was also the first black registrar at the University of South Africa and retired during 2001.

University of Cape Town